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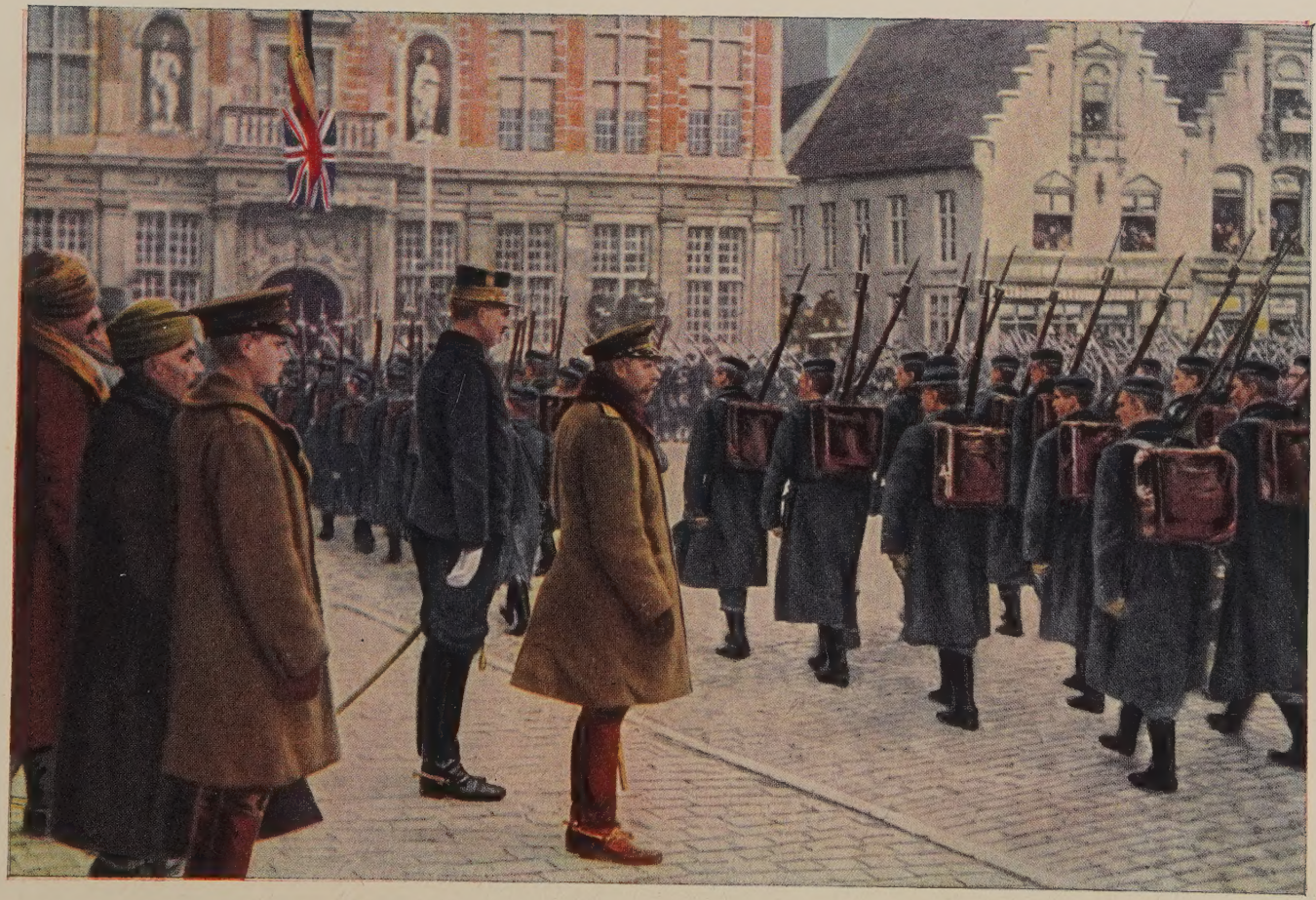

The STORY OF THE GREAT WAR

THE WAR BEGINS
INVASION OF BELGIUM
BATTLE OF THE MARNE

VOLUME III

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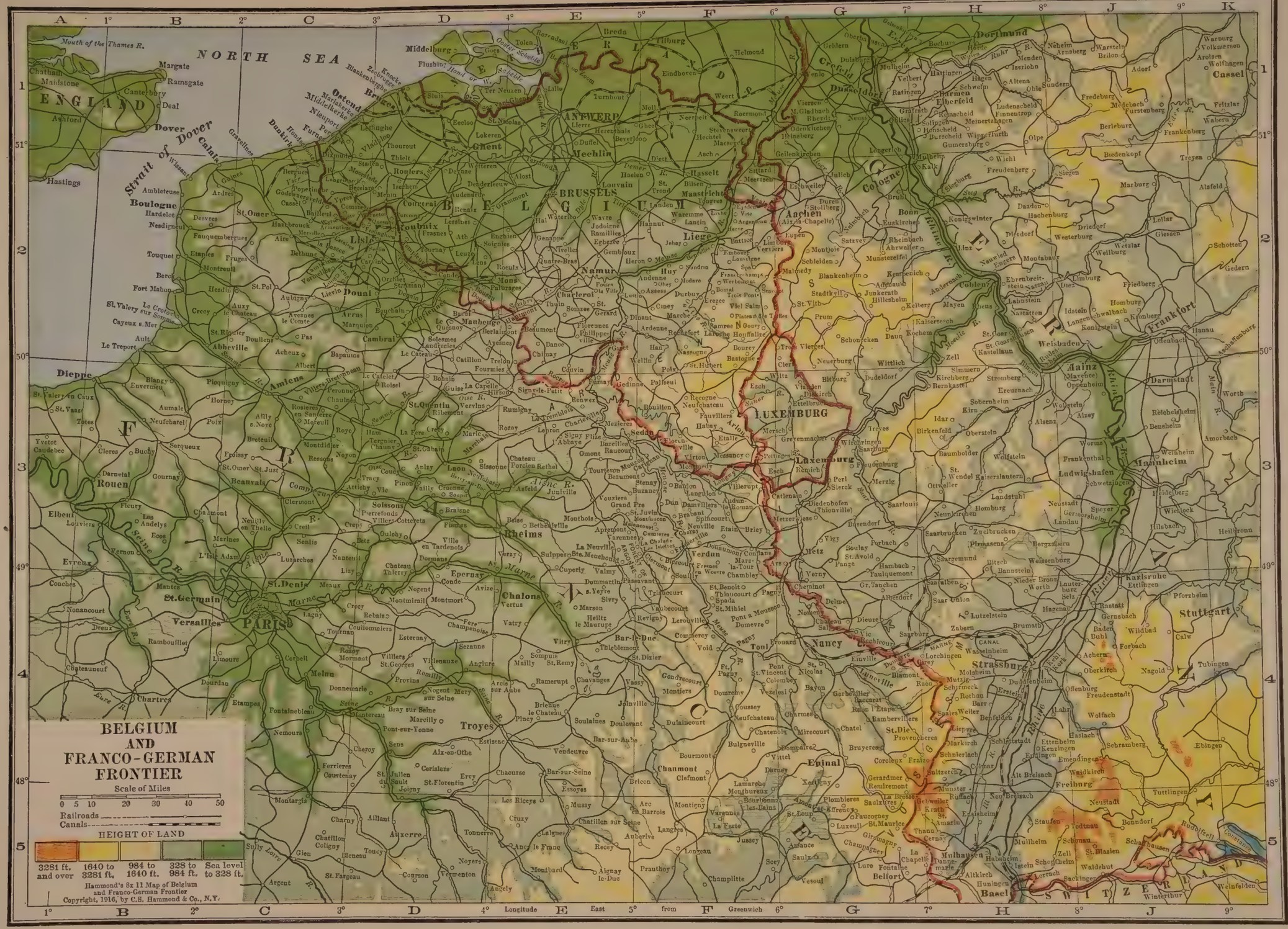
BELGIUM
AND
FRANCO-GERMAN
FRONTIER
Scale of Miles
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
Railroads
Canals
HEIGHT OF LAND
3281 ft. and over
1640 to 3281 ft.
984 to 1640 ft.
328 to 984 ft.
Sea level to 328 ft.
Hammond's 8x 11 Map of Belgium and Franco-German Frontier
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NORTH SEA
ENGLAND
BELGIUM
HOLLAND
LUXEMBURG
FRANCE
GERMANY
SWITZERLAND
PARIS
Longitude East from Greenwich

PART I—GREAT BATTLES OF THE WESTERN ARMIES

CHAPTER I

ATTACK ON BELGIUM

THE first great campaign on the western battle grounds in the European War began on August 4, 1914. On this epoch-making day the German army began its invasion of Belgium—with the conquest of France as its ultimate goal. Six mighty armies stood ready for the great invasion. Their estimated total was 1,200,000 men. Supreme over all was the Emperor as War Lord, but Lieutenant General Helmuth von Moltke, chief of the General Staff, was the practical director of military operations. General von Moltke was a nephew of the great strategist of 1870, and his name possibly appealed as of happy augury for repeating the former capture of Paris.

The First Army was assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle in the north of Belgium, within a few miles of the Dutch frontier. It was under the command of General von Kluck. He was a veteran of both the Austrian and Franco-Prussian Wars, and was regarded as an able infantry leader. His part was to enter Belgium at its northern triangle, which projects between Holland and Germany, occupy Liege, deploy on the great central plains of Belgium, then sweep toward the French northwestern frontier in the German dash for Paris and the English Channel. His army thus formed the right wing of the whole German offensive. It was composed of picked corps, including cavalry of the Prussian Guard.

The Second Army had gathered in the neighborhood of Lim-

bourg under the command of General von Bülow. Its advance was planned down the valleys of the Ourthe and Vesdre to a junction with Von Kluck at Liege, then a march by the Meuse Valley upon Namur and Charleroi. In crossing the Sambre it was to fall into place on the left of Von Kluck's army.

The German center was composed of the Third Army under Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, the Fourth Army led by the crown prince, and the Fifth Army commanded by the Crown Prince of Bavaria. It was assembled on the line Neufchateau-Treves-Metz. Its first offensive was the occupation of Luxemburg. This was performed, after a somewhat dramatic protest by the youthful Grand Duchess, who placed her motor car across the bridge by which the Germans entered her internationally guaranteed independent state. The German pretext was that since Luxemburg railways were German controlled, they were required for the transport of troops. Preparations were then made for a rapid advance through the Ardennes upon the Central Meuse, to form in order upon the left of Von Bülow's army. A part of the Fifth Army was to be detached for operations against the French fortress of Verdun.

The Sixth Army was concentrated at Strassburg in Alsace, under General von Heeringen. As inspector of the Prussian Guards he bore a very high military reputation. For the time being General von Heeringen's part was to remain in Alsace, to deal with a possibly looked for strong French offensive by way of the Vosges or Belfort.

The main plan of the German General Staff, therefore was a wide enveloping movement by the First and Second Armies to sweep the shore of the English Channel in their march on Paris, a vigorous advance of the center through the Ardennes for the same destination, and readiness for battle by the Sixth Army for any French force which might be tempted into Alsace. That this plan was not developed in its entirety, was due to circumstances which fall into another place.

The long anticipated *Day* dawned. Their vast military machine moved with precision and unity. But there was a sur-

PICTORIAL MAP OF FRANCE

prise awaiting them. The Belgians were to offer a serious resistance to passage through their territory—a firm refusal had been delivered at the eleventh hour. The vanguard was thrown forward from Von Kluck's army at Aix, to break through the defenses of Liege and seize the western railways. This force of three divisions was commanded by General von Emmich, one of them joining him at Verviers.

On the evening of August 3, 1914, Von Emmich's force had crossed into Belgium. Early on the morning of August 4, 1914, Von Kluck's second advance line reached Visé, situated on the Meuse north of Liege and close to the Dutch frontier. Here an engagement took place with a Belgian guard, which terminated with the Germans bombarding Visé. The Belgians had destroyed the river bridge, but the Germans succeeded in seizing the crossing.

This was the first actual hostility of the war on the western battle grounds. With the capture of Visé, the way was clear for Von Kluck's main army to concentrate on Belgian territory. By nightfall, Liege was invested on three sides. Only the railway lines and roads running westward remained open.

CHAPTER II

SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF LIEGE

A VIEW of Liege will assist in revealing its three days' siege, with the resulting effect upon the western theatre of war. Liege is the capital of the Walloons, a sturdy race that in times past has at many a crisis proved unyielding determination and courage. At the outbreak of war it was the center of great coal mining and industrial activity. In the commerical world it is known everywhere for the manufacture of firearms. The smoke from hundreds of factories spreads over the city, often hanging in dense clouds. It might aptly be termed the Pittsburg of Belgium. The city lies in a deep, broad cut of the River Meuse,

at its junction with the combined channels of the Ourthe and Vesdre. It stretches across both sides, being connected by numerous bridges, while parallel lines of railway follow the course of the main stream. The trunk line from Germany into Belgium crosses the Meuse at Liege. For the most part the old city of lofty houses clings to a cliffside on the left bank, crowned by an ancient citadel of no modern defensive value. Whatever picturesqueness Liege may have possessed is effaced by the squalid and dilapidated condition of its poorer quarters. To the north broad fertile plains extend into central Belgium, southward on the opposite bank of the Meuse, the Ardennes present a hilly forest, stream-watered region. In its downward course the Meuse flows out of the Liege trench to expand through what is termed the Dutch Flats.

Liege, at the outbreak of the war, was a place of great wealth and extreme poverty—a Liege artisan considered himself in prosperity on $5 a week. It was of the first strategic importance to Belgium. Its situation was that of a natural fortress, barring the advance of a German army.

The defenses of Liege were hardly worth an enemy's gunfire before 1890. They had consisted of a single fort on the Meuse right bank, and the citadel crowning the heights of the old town. But subsequently the Belgian Chamber voted the necessary sums for fortifying Liege and Namur on the latest principles. From the plans submitted, the one finally decided upon was that of the famous Belgian military engineer Henri Alexis Brialmont. His design was a circle of detached forts, already approved by German engineers as best securing a city within from bombardment. With regard to Liege and Namur particularly, Brialmont held that his plan would make passages of the Meuse at those places impregnable to an enemy.

When the German army stood before Liege on this fourth day of August, in 1914, the circumference of the detached forts was thirty-one miles with about two or three miles between them, and at an average of five miles from the city. Each fort was constructed on a new model to withstand the highest range and power of offensive artillery

forecast in the last decade of the nineteenth century. When completed they presented the form of an armored mushroom, thrust upward from a mound by subterranean machinery. The elevation of the cupola in action disclosed no more of its surface than was necessary for the firing of the guns. The mounds were turfed and so inconspicuous that in times of peace sheep grazed over them. In Brialmont's original plan each fort was to be connected by infantry trenches with sunken emplacements for light artillery, but this important part of his design was relegated to the dangerous hour of a threatening enemy. This work was undertaken too late before the onsweep of the Germans. Instead, Brialmont's single weak detail in surrounding each fort with an infantry platform was tenaciously preserved long after its uselessness must have been apparent. Thus Liege was made a ring fortress to distinguish it from the former latest pattern of earth ramparts and outworks.

Six major and six minor of these forts encircled Liege. From north to south, beginning with those facing the German frontier, their names ran as follows: Barchon, Evegnée, Fleron, Chaudfontaine, Embourg, Boncelles, Flemalle, Hollogne, Loncin, Lantin, Liers, and Pontisse. The armaments of the forts consisted of 6-inch and 4.7-inch guns, with 8-inch mortars and quick firers. They were in the relative number of two, four, two and four for the major forts, and two, two, one and three for the minor *fortins*, as such were termed. The grand total was estimated at 400 pieces. In their confined underground quarters the garrisons, even of the major forts, did not exceed eighty men from the engineer, artillery and infantry branches of the service. Between Fort Pontisse and the Dutch frontier was less than six miles.

It was through this otherwise undefended gap that Von Kluck purposed to advance his German army after the presumed immediate fall of Liege, to that end having seized the Meuse crossing at Visé. The railway line to Aix-la-Chapelle was dominated by Fort Fleron, while the minor Forts Chaudfontaine and Embourg, to the south, commanded the trunk line by way of Liege into Belgium. On the plateau, above Liege, Fort Loncin held

the railway junction of Ans and the lines running from Liege north and west. Finally, the forts were not constructed on a geometric circle, but in such manner that the fire of any two was calculated to hold an enemy at bay should a third between them fall. This was probably an accurate theory before German guns of an unimagined caliber and range were brought into action.

In command of the Belgian forts at Liege was General Leman. He had served under Brialmont, and was pronounced a serious and efficient officer. He was a zealous military student, physically extremely active, and constantly on the watch for any relaxation of discipline. These qualities enabled him to grasp at the outset the weakness of his position.

If the Germans believed the refusal to grant a free passage for their armies through Belgium to be little more than a diplomatic protest, it would seem the Belgian Government was equally mistaken in doubting the Germans would force a way through an international treaty of Belgian neutrality. Consequently, the German crossing of the frontier discovered Belgium with her mobilization but half complete, mainly on a line for the defense of Brussels and Antwerp. It had been estimated by Brialmont that 75,000 men of all arms were necessary for the defense of Liege on a war footing, probably 35,000 was the total force hastily gathered in the emergency to withstand the German assault on the fortifications. It included the Civic Guard.

General Leman realized, therefore, that, without a supporting field army, it would be impossible for him to hold the German hosts before Liege for more than a few days—a week at most.

But he hoped within such time the French or British would march to his relief. Thus his chief concern was for the forts protecting the railway leading from Namur down the Meuse Valley into Liege—the line of a French or British advance.

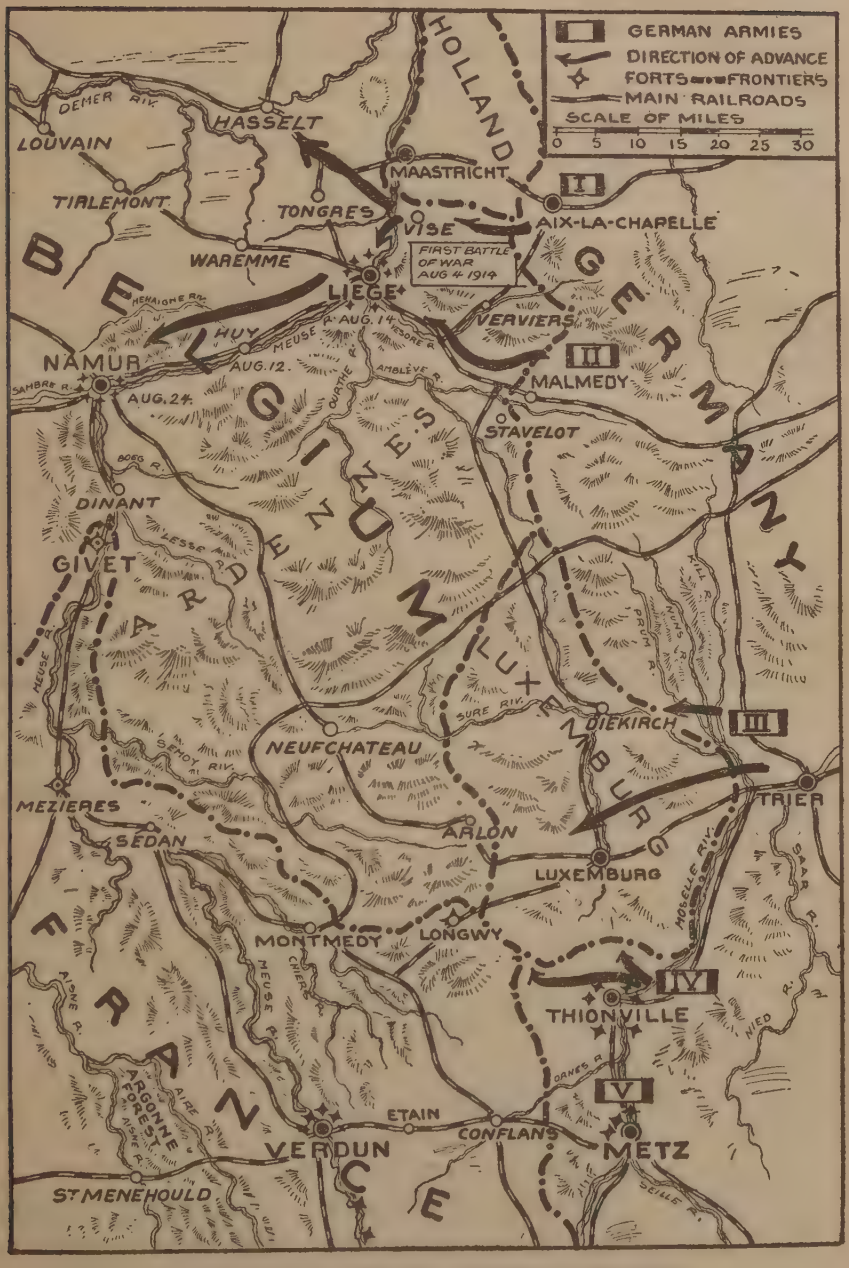
On the afternoon of August 4, 1914, German patrols appeared on the left bank of the Meuse, approaching from Visé. They were also observed by the sentries on Forts Barchon, Evegnée and Fleron. German infantry and artillery presently came into

view with the unmistakable object of beginning the attack on those forts. The forts fired a few shots by way of a challenge. As evening fell the woods began to echo with the roar of artillery. Later, Forts Fleron, Chaudfontaine and Embourg were added to the German bombardment. The Germans used long range field pieces with powerful explosive shells. The fire proved to be remarkably accurate. As their shells exploded on the cupolas and platforms of the forts, the garrisons in their confined citadels began to experience that inferno of vibrations which subsequently deprived them of the incentive to eat or sleep. The Belgians replied vigorously, but owing to the broken nature of the country, and the forethought with which the Germans took advantage of every form of gun cover, apparently little execution was dealt upon the enemy. However, the Belgians claimed to have silenced two of the German pieces.

In the darkness of this historic night of August 4, 1914, the flames of the fortress guns pierced the immediate night with vivid streaks. Their searchlights swept in broad streams the wooded slopes opposite. The cannonade resounded over Liege, as if with constant peals of thunder. In the city civilians sought the shelter of their cellars, but few of the German shells escaped their range upon the forts to disturb them.

This exchange of artillery went on until near daybreak of August 5, 1914, when infantry fire from the woods to the right of Fort Embourg apprised the defenders that the Germans were advancing to the attack. The Germans came on in their customary massed formation. The prevalent opinion that in German tactics such action was employed to hearten the individual soldier, was denied by their General Staff. In their opinion an advantage was thus gained by the concentration of rifle fire. Belgian infantry withstood the assault, and counter-attacked. When dawn broke, a general engagement was in progress. About eight o'clock the Germans were compelled to withdraw.

The first engagement of the war was won by the Belgians. It was reported that the Belgian fire had swept the Germans down in thousands, but this was denied by German authorities. Up



BEGINNING OF GERMAN INVASION OF BELGIUM

to this time the German forces before Liege were chiefly Von Kluck's vanguard under Von Emmich, his second line of advance, and detachments of Von Bülow's army. On the Belgian side no attempt was made to follow up the advantage. The reason given is that the Germans were seen to be in strong cavalry force, an arm lost totally in the military complement of Liege. The German losses were undoubtedly severe, especially in front of Fort Barchon. This was one of the major forts, triangular in shape, and surrounded by a ditch and barbed wire entanglements. The armament of these major forts had recently been reenforced by night, secretly, with guns of heavier caliber from Antwerp. As they outmatched the German field pieces of the first attack, presumably the German Intelligence Department had failed in news of them. An armistice requested by the Germans to gather in the wounded and bury the dead was refused. Thereupon the artillery duel recommenced.

A hot and oppressive day disclosed woods rent and scarred, standing wheat fields shell-plowed and trampled, and farm houses set ablaze. The bringing of the Belgian wounded into Liege apprised the citizens that their side had also suffered considerably. Meanwhile, the Germans were reenforced by the Tenth Hanoverian Army Corps, from command of which General von Emmich had been detached to lead Von Kluck's vanguard, also artillery with 8.4-inch howitzers.

The bombardment on this 5th day of August, 1914, now stretched from Visé around the Meuse right bank half circle of forts to embrace Pontisse and Boncelles at its extremities. In a few hours infantry attack began again. The Germans advanced in masses by short rushes, dropping to fire rifle volleys, and then onward with unflinching determination. The forts, wreathed in smoke, blazed shells among them; their machine guns spraying streams of bullets. The Germans were repulsed and compelled to retire, but only to re-form for a fresh assault. Both Belgian and German aeroplanes flew overhead to signal their respective gunners. A Zeppelin was observed, but did not come within range of Belgian fire. The Belgians claim to have shot down one German aeroplane, and another is said to

have been brought to earth by flying within range of its own artillery.

During the morning of August 5, Fort Fleron was put out of action by shell destruction of its cupola-hoisting machinery. This proved a weak point in Brialmont's fortress plan. It was presently discovered that the fire of the supporting forts Evegnée and Chaudfontaine could not command the lines forming the apex of their triangle. Further, since the Belgian infantry was not in sufficient force to hold the lines between the forts, a railway into Liege fell to the enemy. The fighting here was of such a desperate nature, that General Leman hastened to reenforce with all his reserve.

This battle went on during the afternoon and night of August 5, into the morning of August 6, 1914. But the fall of Fort Fleron began to tell in favor of the Germans. Belgian resistance perforce weakened. The ceaseless pounding of the German 8.4-inch howitzers smashed the inner concrete and stone protective armor of the forts, as if of little more avail than cardboard. At intervals on August 6, Forts Chaudfontaine, Evegnée and Barchon fell under the terrific hail of German shells. A way was now opened into the city, though, for the most part, still contested by Belgian infantry. A party of German hussars availed themselves of some unguarded path to make a daring but ineffectual dash to capture General Leman and his staff.

General Leman was consulting with his officers at military headquarters, on August 6, 1914, when they were startled by shouts outside. He rushed forth into a crowd of citizens to encounter eight men in German uniform. General Leman cried for a revolver to defend himself, but another officer, fearing the Germans had entered the city in force, lifted him up over a foundry wall. Both Leman and the officer made their escape by way of an adjacent house. Belgian Civic Guards hastening to the scene dispatched an officer and two men of the German raiders. The rest of the party are said to have been made prisoners.

The end being merely a question of hours, General Leman

ordered the evacuation of the city by the infantry. He wisely decided it could be of more service to the Belgian army at Dyle, than held in a beleaguered and doomed city. Reports indicate that this retreat, though successfully performed, was precipitate. The passage of it was scattered with arms, equipment, and supplies of all kinds. An ambulance train was abandoned, twenty locomotives left in the railway station, and but one bridge destroyed in rear beyond immediate repair. After its accomplishment, General Leman took command of the northern forts, determined to hold them against Von Kluck until the last Belgian gun was silenced.

Early on August 7, 1914, Burgomaster Kleyer and the Bishop of Liege negotiated terms for the surrender of the city. It had suffered but slight damage from the bombardment. Few of the citizens were reported among the killed or injured. On behalf of the Germans it must be said their occupation of Liege was performed in good order, with military discipline excellently maintained. They behaved with consideration toward the inhabitants in establishing their rule in the city, and paid for all supplies requisitioned. They were quartered in various public buildings and institutions, probably to the number of 10,000. The German troops at first seemed to present an interesting spectacle. They were mostly young men, reported as footsore from their long march in new, imperfectly fitting boots, and hungry from the lack of accompanying commissariat. This is proof that the German's military machine did not work to perfection at the outset. Later, some hostile acts by Belgian individuals moved the German military authorities to seize a group of the principal citizens, and warn the inhabitants that the breaking of a peaceful attitude would be at the risk of swiftly serious punishment. Precautions to enforce order were such as is provided in martial law, and carried out with as little hardship as possible to the citizens. The Germans appeared anxious to restore confidence and win a feeling of good will.

For some days after the capitulation of the city the northern forts continued a heroic resistance. So long as these remained uncaptured, General Leman maintained that, strategically,

Liege had not fallen. He thus held in check the armies of Von Kluck and Von Bülow, when every hour was of supreme urgency for their respective onsweep into central Belgium and up the Meuse Valley. The Germans presently brought into an overpowering bombardment their 11-inch siege guns.

On August 13, 1914, Embourg was stricken into ruin. On the same day the electric lighting apparatus of Fort Boncelles having been destroyed, the few living men of its garrison fought through the following night in darkness, and in momentary danger of suffocation from gases emitted by the exploding German shells.

Early in the morning of August 14, 1914, though its cupolas were battered in and shells rained upon the interior, the commander refused an offer of surrender. A little later the concrete inner chamber walls fell in. The commander of Boncelles, having exhausted his defensive, hoisted the white flag. He had held out for eleven days in a veritable death-swept inferno.

Fort Loncin disputed with Boncelles the honor of being the last to succumb. The experience of its garrison differed only in terrible details from Boncelles. Its final gun shot was fired by a man with his left hand, since the other had been severed. Apparently a shell exploded in its magazine, and blew up the whole fort. General Leman was discovered amid its débris, pinned beneath a huge beam. He was released by his own men. When taken to a trench, a German officer found that he was merely unconscious from shock.

When sufficiently recovered, General Leman was conducted to General von Heeringen to tender his personal surrender. The two had previously been comrades at maneuvers. The report of their meeting is given by a German officer. The guard presented the customary salute due General Leman's rank. General von Emmich advanced a few steps to meet General Leman. Both generals saluted.

"General," said Von Emmich, "you have gallantly and nobly held your forts."

"I thank you," Leman replied. "Our troops have lived up to their reputation. War is not like maneuvers, *mon Général*," he

added with a pointed smile. "I ask you to bear witness that you found me unconscious."

General Leman unbuckled his sword to offer it to the victor. Von Emmich bowed.

"No, keep it," he gestured. "To have crossed swords with you has been an honor."

Subsequently the President of the French Republic bestowed on Liege the Cross of the Legion of Honor. To its motto in this instance might have been added appropriately: Liege, the Savior of Paris. The few days of its resistance to an overwhelming force enabled the Belgium army to improve its mobilization, the British to throw an expeditionary army into France, and the French to make a new offensive alignment. It will forever remain a brilliant page in war annals. In a military estimate it proved that forts constructed on the lastest scientific principles, but unsupported by an intrenched field army, crumple under the concentrated fire of long-range, high-power enemy guns.

The fall of the northern and eastern Liege forts released Von Kluck's army for its march into central Belgium. Meanwhile the Belgian army had been concentrated on a line of the River Dyle, with its left touching Malines and its right resting on Louvain. Its commander, General Selliers de Moranville, made his headquarters in the latter city. The Belgian force totaled 110,000 men of all complements. Whether this included the reenforcement by the Liege infantry is uncertain.

During August 10 and 11, 1914, General Moranville threw forward detachments to screen his main body in front of the German advance. On the 11th a rumor that the French had crossed the Sambre, moved General Moranville to extend his right wing to Eghezee, with the hope of getting in touch with the Allies. That the French and British were hastening to his support could not be doubted. They were already overdue, but assuredly would come soon. That was the Belgian reliance, passing from mouth to mouth among the Court, Cabinet Ministers, General Staff, down to the factory toilers, miners, and peasants on their farms. The Sambre report, like many others in various places, proved unfounded.

CHAPTER III

BELGIUM'S DEFIANCE

A VIEW of the general situation in Belgium will assist in clearing the way for swiftly following events. Germany had invaded Belgium against the diplomatic and active protests of its Government. But the German Government still hoped that the heroic resistance of Liege would satisfy Belgian national spirit, and a free passage of German troops now be granted. The German Emperor made a direct appeal to the King of the Belgians through the medium of the Queen of Holland. From the German point of outlook their victory could best be attained by the march through Belgium upon Paris. The German Government asserted that the French and British contemplated a similar breach of Belgian neutrality. To their mind, it was a case of which should be on the ground first. On the other hand, the Allies pronounced the German invasion of Belgium an unprovoked assault, and produced countertestimony. At this time we can venture no further to disentangle it. Probably many years must pass, and mutual passions succeeded by calm investigation, before the clear light of truth can form a correct judgment.

Let us now glance at the condition of Belgium when war was declared. The Belgians were an industrial and not a militant people. They had ample reason to yearn for a permanent peace. Their country had been the cockpit of Europe from the time of Cæsar until Waterloo. The names of their cities, for the most part, represented great historic battle fields. Again and again had the ruin of conflict swept over their unfortunately situated land. At all periods the Belgians were brave fighters on one side or the other, for Belgium had been denied a national unity. Doubtless, therefore, they welcomed the establishment of their independent sovereignty and the era of peace which followed. Historically, they had suffered enough, with an abundance to spare, from perpetual warfare. Their minds turned hopefully toward industrial and commercial activity, stimulated by the

natural mineral wealth of their soil. Thus the products of their factories reached all countries, South America, China, Manchuria, and Central Africa, especially of later years, where a great territory had been acquired in the Congo. The iron and steel work of Liege was famous, Antwerp had become one of the chief ports of Europe and growing into a financial power. But owing to the confined boundaries of Belgium, there grew to be a congestion of population. This produced a strong democratic and socialistic uplift which even threatened the existence of the monarchy. Also, all that monarchy seemed to imply.

The Belgians, doubtless with memories of the past, despised and hated the display of military. Consequently it was only with difficulty, and in the face of popular opposition, that the Belgium Government had succeeded with military plans for defense, but imperfectly carried out. Herein, perhaps, we have the keynote to Belgium's desperate resistance to the German invaders. In the light of the foregoing, it is easily conceivable that the Germans represented to the Belgians the military yoke. They were determined to have none of it, upon any overtures or terms. But they relied on France and England for protection, when common prudence should have made the mobilization of an up-to-date army of 500,000 men ready for the call to repel an invader on either of the frontiers, instead of the practically helpless force of 110,000.

The German General Staff did not believe the Belgians intended to raise a serious barrier in their path. But with the crisis, democratic Belgium united in a rush to arms, which recalls similar action by the American colonists at the Revolution. Every form of weapon was grasped, from old muskets to pitchforks and shearing knives. It was remarked by a foreign witness that in default of properly equipped armories, the Belgians emptied the museums to confront the Germans with the strangest assortment of antiquated military tools.

As testimony of Belgian feeling, the Labor party organ "Le Peuple" issued the following trumpet blast: "Why do we, as irreconcilable antimilitarists, cry 'Bravo!' from the bottom of our hearts to all those who offer themselves for the defense of the

country? Because it is not only necessary to protect the hearths and homes, the women and the children, but it is also necessary to protect at the price of our blood the heritage of our ancient freedom. Go, then, sons of the workers, and register your names as recruits. We will rather die for the idea of progress and solidarity of humanity than live under a régime whose brutal force and savage violence have wiped outright."

The Belgian General Staff, foreseeing dire consequences from such inflaming press utterances, warned all those not regularly enlisted to maintain a peaceful attitude. How far this action was unsuccessful unfortunate events disclosed.

On Wednesday, August 12, 1914, a German cavalry screen, thrown in advance of the main forces, came in touch with Belgian patrols. A series of engagements took place. The Germans tried to seize the bridges across the Dyle at Haelen, and at Cortenachen on the Velpe, a tributary of the former river, mainly with the object of outflanking the Belgian left wing. The Belgians are said to have numbered some 10,000 of all arms, and were successful in repulsing the Germans.

On August 13, 1914, similar actions were continued. At Tirlemont 2,000 German cavalry swept upon the town, but were beaten off. At Eghezee on the extreme Belgian right—close to Namur and the historic field of Ramillies—another brush with the Germans took place. Belgian cavalry caught a German cavalry detachment bivouacked in the village. Sharp fighting through the streets ensued before the Germans withdrew. In spite of the warning of the Belgian General Staff, and similar advance German notices, the citizens of some of these and other places began sniping German patrols.

Meantime, moving over the roads toward Namur, toiled the huge German 42-centimeter guns. The German General Staff had taken to mind the lesson of Liege. Each gun was transported in several parts, hauled by traction engines and forty horses. Of this, with the advance of Von Kluck and Von Bülow, the Belgian General Staff was kept in total ignorance by the German screen of cavalry. So ably was this screen work performed that the Belgians were led to believe the Germans had

succeeded in placing no more than two divisions of cavalry, together with a few detachments of infantry and artillery, on Belgian soil. They, in fact, regarded the German cavalry skirmishing as a rather clumsy offensive.

As we have seen, the resistance of Forts Boncelles and Loncin at Liege held back the main German advance from seven to ten days. Their fall released into German control the railway junction at Ans. With that was included the line from Liege up the left bank of the Meuse to Namur. Also, another line direct to Brussels.

On August 15, 1914, the cavalry screen was withdrawn, and four German army corps were revealed to the surprised Belgian line. In this emergency, clearly their only hope lay with the French. In Louvain, Brussels, and Antwerp, anxious questions lay on all lips. "Why do not the French hasten to our aid? When will they come? Will the British fail us at the twelfth hour?"

Eager watchers at Ostend beheld no sign of the promised transports to disembark a British army of support in the day of overwhelming need. About this time some French cavalry crossed the Sambre to join hands with the Belgian right wing near Waterloo. But it was little more than a detachment. The French General Staff was occupied with a realignment, and had decided not to advance into Belgium until they could do so in force sufficient to cope with the Germans. The Belgian General Staff saw there was no other course but to fall back, fighting rear-guard actions until the longed-for French army was heralded by the thunder of friendly guns.

The Belgian army was thus withdrawn from the River Gethe to hold Aerschot on its left stubbornly through August 14, 1914. Diest, St. Trond, and Waremme fell before the German tidal wave without resistance. Von Kluck's main army endeavored to sweep around the Belgian right at Wavre, but was checked for a brief space.

CHAPTER IV

CAPTURE OF LOUVAIN—SURRENDER OF BRUSSELS

DURING August 17, 1914, the German center was hurled forward in irresistible strength. The citizens of the villages in its path fled precipitously along the roads to Brussels. At intersections all kinds of vehicles bearing household effects, together with live stock, blocked the way to safety. The uhlan had become a terror, but not without some provocation. Tirlemont was bombarded, reduced, and evacuated by the Belgian troops. The latter made a vigorous defensive immediately before Louvain, but their weakness in artillery and numbers could not withstand the overwhelming superiority of the Germans. They were thrust back from the valley of the Dyle to begin their retreat on Antwerp, chiefly by way of Malines. This was to elude a successful German envelopment on their Louvain right. They retired in good order, but their losses had been considerable.

This body was the Belgian right wing, which fell back to take up a position before Louvain. Here it fought a well-sustained action on August 19, 1914, the purpose of which was to cover the retreat of the main army by way of Malines on Antwerp. The Belgian right wing thus became a rear guard.

It withstood the German attack until the early morning of August 20, 1914, when, separated from the main body, the overpowering number of German guns and men drove it back to a final stand between Louvain and Brussels. If its losses had been heavy, the carrying away of the wounded proved that it still maintained a fighting front. The retreat of the main army on Antwerp was part of Brialmont's plan for the defense of Belgium, since the position of Brussels was not capable of a strong defense. By this time the main army was safely passing down the valley of the Dyle to the shelter of the Antwerp forts, leaving the right wing to its fate. Louvain thus fell to the Germans.

Toward noon of August 20, 1914, the burgomaster and four

sheriffs awaited at one of the city gates, the first German appearance. This proved to be a party of hussars bearing a white flag. They conducted the burgomaster to the waiting generals at the head of the advance column. In token of surrender the burgomaster was requested to remove his scarf of office, displaying the Belgian national colors. The German terms were then pronounced. A free passage of troops through the city was to be granted, and 3,000 men garrisoned in its barracks. In return, cash was to be paid for all supplies requisitioned, and a guarantee given for the lives and property of the inhabitants. The Germans further agreed to maintain the established civil power, but warned that hostile acts by civilians would be severely punished. These terms were in general in conformity with the rules of war governing the military occupation of an enemy city. In this respect emphasis should be laid on the fact that under these rules the hostile act of any civilian places him in the same position as a spy. His recognized sentence is death by court-martial.

The Germans entered Louvain with bands playing, and singing in a great swelling chorus: "Die Wacht am Rhein" and "Hail to the War Lord." They marched to quick time, but in passing through the great square of the Gare du Nord broke into the parade goose step. In the van were such famous regiments as the Death's Head and Zeiten Hussars. The infantry wore heavy boots, which, falling in unison, struck the earth with resounding blows, to echo back from the house walls. Thus cavalry, infantry, and artillery poured through Louvain in a gray-green surge of hitherto unimagined military might. This, for the latter part of the 20th and the day following.

At first the citizens looked on from the sidewalks in a spellbound silence. Scarcely one seemed to possess the incentive to breathe a whisper. Only the babies and very small children regarded the awe-inspiring spectacle as something provided by way of entertainment. For the rest of the citizens it was dumbfounding beyond human comprehension. Cavalry, infantry, and artillery rolled on unceasingly to the clatter of horses' hoofs, the tramp of feet, the rumble of guns, and that triumphant mighty chorus. There was nothing of aforetime plumed and gold-

laced splendor of war about it, but the modern Teutonic arms on grim business bent. Except for a curious glance bestowed here and there, the German troops marched with eyes front, and a precision as if being reviewed by the emperor. A few shots were heard to stir instant terror among the citizen onlookers, but these were between the German advance guard and Belgian stragglers left behind in the city. Presently the side streets became dangerous to pedestrians from onrushing automobiles containing staff officers, and motor wagons of the military train. General von Arnim, in command, ordered the hauling down of all allied colors, but permitted the Belgian flag to remain flying above the Hôtel de Ville. He promptly issued a proclamation warning all citizens to preserve the peace. It was both placarded and announced verbally. The latter was performed by a minor city official, ringing a bell as he passed through the streets accompanied by policemen.

Toward evening of August 20, 1914, the cafés and restaurants filled up with hungry German officers and men; every hotel room was occupied, and provision shops speedily sold out the stores on their shelves. The Germans paid in cash for everything ordered, and preserved a careful attitude of nonaggression toward the citizens. But subconsciously there ran an undercurrent of dread insecurity. At the outset a German officer was said to have been struck by a sniper's bullet. Somewhat conspicuously the wounded officer was borne on a litter through the streets, followed by the dead body of his assailant. Very promptly a news curtain was drawn down around the city, cutting it off from all information of the world without. Artillery fire was heard. Presumably this came from the last stand of the Belgian rear guard in a valley of the hilly country between Louvain and Brussels. With sustained optimism to the end, rumor had it that the artillery fire was that of French and British guns coming to the relief of Louvain. Toward nightfall one or two groups of snipers were brought in from the suburbs and marched to the place of execution.

The feeling of a threatened calamity deepened. Another warning proclamation was issued ordering all citizens to give up their

arms. Further, everyone was ordered to bed at eight o'clock, all windows were to be closed and all doors unlocked. A burning lamp was to be placed in each window On the claim that German soldiers had been killed by citizens, the burgomaster and several of the city officials were secured as hostages. A stern proclamation was issued threatening with immediate execution every citizen found with a weapon in his possession or house. Every house from which a shot was fired would be burned.

This was on August 22, 1914. By the evening of that day the German army had passed through Louvain, estimated to the number of 50,000 men. Only the 3,000 garrison remained in the city. Outwardly, the citizens resumed their usual daily affairs as if with a sense of relief, but whispers dropped now and then revealed an abiding terror beneath. Some time during the next day or two the anticipated calamity fell upon Louvain. The German officers insisted that sniping was steadily going on, and the military authorities put into force their threatened reprisal. The torch, or rather incendiary tablets were thrown into convicted houses. Larger groups of citizens were led to execution. Thereupon the "brute" passion dormant in soldiers broke the bonds of discipline. Flames burst forth everywhere. Beneath the lurid glow cast upon the sky above Louvain whole streets stood out in blackened ruin, and those architectural treasures of the Halles and the University, with its famous library, were destroyed beyond hope of repair. Only the walls of St. Peter's Church, containing many priceless paintings, remained.

Meanwhile, on the morning of August 20, 1914, the German army had swept away the comparatively small Belgian rearguard force before Brussels, and advanced upon the capital. On the previous 17th the King of the Belgians removed his Government to Antwerp. The diplomatic corps followed. Mr. Brand Whitlock, the American Minister, however, remained. In his capacity as a neutral he had assisted stranded Germans in Brussels from hasty official and mob peril. He stayed to perform a similar service for the Belgians and Allies. His success in these efforts won for him German respect and the gratitude of the whole Belgian nation.

A lingering plan for defending Brussels by throwing up barricades and constructing wire entanglements, to be manned by the Civic Guard, was abandoned in the face of wiser counsel. It would merely have resulted in a bombardment, with needless destruction of life and property. Brussels was defenseless.

In flight before the German host, refugees of all classes were streaming into Brussels—young and old, rich and poor, priest and layman. Nearly all bore some burden of household treasure, many some pathetically absurd family heirloom. Every kind of vehicle appeared to have been called into use, from smart carriages drawn by heavy Flemish horses to little carts harnessed to dogs. Over all reigned a stupefied silence, broken only by shuffling footfalls. Among them the absence of automobiles and light horses would indicate all such had been commandeered by the Belgian military authorities. Their cavalry was badly in need of good light-weight mounts. At crossroads passage to imagined safety was blocked by farm live stock driven by bewildered peasants.

On Thursday morning, August 20, 1914, the burgomaster motored forth to meet the Germans. His reception and the terms dictated by General von Arnim were almost identically the same as at Louvain. The burgomaster was perforce compelled to accept. The scene of the entry of the German troops into Louvain was repeated at Brussels. There was the same stolidly silent-packed gathering of onlookers on the sidewalks, the same thundering triumphant march of the German host. Corps after corps, probably of those who had fought at Liege, and subsequently passed around the city on the grand sweep toward the French frontier. Moreover, huge bodies of German troops were advancing up the valley of the Meuse and through the woods of the Ardennes. As in Louvain, that night the hotels, restaurants, cafés, and shops of Brussels were patronized by a rush of trade which never before totaled such extent in a single day. Bills of purchase were settled by the Germans in cash. The city was promptly assessed a war indemnity of $40,000,000.

With the fall of Brussels, the first objective of the Germans

may be said to have been gained. But the right wing of Von Kluck's army was still operating northward upon Antwerp. The Belgian army had escaped him within the circle of Antwerp's forts, so that he detailed a force deemed to be sufficient to hold the enemy secure. Then he struck eastward between Antwerp and Brussels at Alost, Ghent, and Bruges. In his advance he swept several divisions of cavalry, also motor cars bearing machine guns. Beyond Bruges his patrol caught their first glimpse of the North Sea, drawing in toward another much-hoped-for goal on the English Channel.

But the Belgian army within security of Antwerp had not been routed. It had retreated in good order, thanks to the resistance of its right-wing rear guard. General de Moranville promptly reenforced it with new volunteers to the extent of some 125,000 men. In addition, he drew upon a fresh supply of ammunition, and new artillery well horsed. His cavalry, however, were certainly no better and probably worse than that with which his army had been complemented originally.

On August 23, 1914, obtaining information that the Germans were in considerably inferior force at Malines, the Belgians began a vigorous counteroffensive. General de Moranville drove the Germans out of Malines on the day following. That was in the nature of a master stroke, for it gave the Belgians control of the shortest railway from Germany into West Flanders. Further, since Von Kluck had reached Bruges, and reenforcements under General von Boehn had passed across the Belgian direct line on Brussels, the great German right wing was in danger of being caught in a trap. Von Boehn, therefore, was hurriedly detached rearward to deal with the Belgian counteroffensive. But this deprived Von Kluck of his needed reenforcements to overcome 2,000 British marines landed at Ostend, that, together with the Civic Guard, had beaten back German patrols from the place. Had the British now landed an army at Ostend, Von Kluck, between the Belgian and British forces, would have been in serious danger of annihilation. With the German right wing thus crumpled, the whole of their offensive would have broken down. But the British did not come, and so the Belgians

were left to fight it out single handed. This fighting went on for three weeks, with accurate details lacking. Mainly it was upon the line Aershot-Dyle Valley-Termonde, with Antwerp for the Belgian base.

On August 24, 1914, a German Zeppelin sailed over Antwerp and dropped a number of bombs. The Belgians thrust their right wing forward and recaptured Alost. They advanced their center to a siege of Cortenburg. Malines seemed secure. To the Belgians this was a historic triumph. Famous for its manufacture of lace under the name of Mechlin, almost every street contained some relic of architectural interest. The Cathedral of St. Rombaut, the seat of a cardinal archbishop, held upon its walls some of Van Dyck's masterpieces. Margaret of Austria had held court in its Palais de Justice.

In this emergency, Von Boehn was heavily reenforced with the Third Army Corps, reserves from the south, and 15,000 sailors and marines. His army was now between 250,000 and 300,000 men. This placed overwhelming odds against the Belgians. But for four days they fought a stubborn battle at Weerde.

This was from September 13 to 16, 1914, and resulted in the capture of the Louvain-Malines railway by the Germans. The Belgians had now fought to the extremity of what could be expected without aid from the Allies. The sole action left for them was to fall back for a defense of Antwerp. Von Kluck's right wing of the whole German offensive had completed its task on Belgian soil.

CHAPTER V

COMING OF THE BRITISH

WE now come to the arrival of the British on the Continent. In using the term British, it is expressly intended to comprise the united forces of the British Isles.

On August 3, 1914, the British Government practically gave up hope that war with Germany could be avoided, though it would

appear to have lingered until the ultimatum to Germany to vacate Belgian soil remained unanswered. On that day the army was mobilized at Aldershot.

On August 5, 1914, Lord Kitchener was recalled at the outset from a journey to Egypt, and appointed Minister of War. No more fortunate selection than this could have been made. Above all else, Lord Kitchener's reputation had been won as an able transport officer. In the emergency, as Minister of War, the responsibility for the transport of a British army oversea rested in his hands. On August 5, 1914, the House of Commons voted a credit of $100,000,000, and an increase of 500,000 men to the regular forces. Upon the same day preparations went forward for the dispatch of an expeditionary army to France.

The decision to send the army to France, instead of direct to a landing in Belgium, would seem to have been in response to an urgent French entreaty that Great Britain mark visibly on French soil her unity with that nation at the supreme crisis. For some days previously British reluctance to enter the war while a gleam of hope remained to confine, if not prevent the European conflagration, had created a feeling of disappointment in France.

The British Expeditionary Army was formed in four divisions. The average British division comprised 12,000 infantry, a regiment of cavalry, and 76 guns, with complements of engineers and signal corps. Also medical, commissariat, and transport services. But with the Expeditionary Army all complements were considerably augmented. Thus were five brigades, or fifteen regiments of cavalry. The total appears to have been between 150,000 and 160,000 men. The whole was placed under the command of Field Marshal Sir John French, with Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Murray, Chief of Staff. Field Marshal French's record in the Boer War and elsewhere had proved him to be an efficient cavalry leader. He occupied in succession the positions of commander of the First Army Corps at Aldershot, Inspector General of the Forces, and Chief of the Imperial General Staff. But he had never commanded an army in the field, and was unfamiliar with the handling of the huge armies of the European Continent. We may here note, in passing, that with the single

exception of Field Marshal von Mackensen, no cavalry general in modern times has successfully commanded a whole army. He was sixty-two and was two years younger than Lord Kitchener. His responsibilities were great, his capabilities for the developing scope of the task untried, but as a serious and courageous officer he fully merited the honors he had already won.

By August 7, 1914, Admiral Jellicoe was able to guarantee a safe passage for the British army across the English Channel. A fortunate mobilization of the British Grand Fleet in the North Sea for maneuvers shut off the German Grand Fleet from raiding the Channel. There was nothing to criticize in the manner in which the Expeditionary Army was thrown into France. Its equipment was ready and in all details fully worthy of German military organization. From arms to boots—the latter not long since a scandal of shoddy workmanship—only the best material and skill had been accepted. Its transport proved the genius of Lord Kitchener in that brand of military service. The railways leading to the ports of embarkation, together with passenger steamships—some of them familiar in American ports—were commandeered as early as the 4th of August.

During the night of August 7, 1914, train after train filled with troops steamed toward Southampton, and some other south-coast ports. Complements were also embarked at Dublin, Avonmouth, and the Bristol Channel. In the middle of the night citizens of small towns along the route were awakened by the unceasing rumble of trains. They had no conception of its import. They did not even realize that war had actually burst upon the serenity of their peaceful lives. Each transport vessel was placed in command of a naval officer, and guarded in its passage across the channel by light cruisers and torpedo destroyers. The transport of the whole Expeditionary Army was completed within ten days, without the loss of a man and with a precision worthy of all military commendation. But such secrecy was maintained that the British public remained in ignorance of its passage until successfully accomplished. American correspondents, however, were not yet strictly censored, so that their papers published news of it on August 9.

On Sunday, August 9, 1914, two British transports were observed making for the harbor of Boulogne. The weather was all that could be wished, the crossing resembled a bank-holiday excursion. For some days previously the French had taken a gloomy view of British support. But French fishermen returning from Scotland and English ports maintained confidence, for had not British fishermen told them the French would never be abandoned to fall a prey to the enemy.

When the two advance British transports steamed into view, "Les Anglais," at last everyone cried. At once a hugely joyful reversion of feeling. The landing of the British soldiers was made a popular ovation. Their appearance, soldierly bearing, their gentleness toward women and children, their care of the horses were showered with heartfelt French compliments. Especially the Scotch Highlanders, after their cautious fashion, wondered at the exuberance of their welcome. For the brave Irish, was not Marshal MacMahon of near-Irish descent and the first president of the Third Republic? The Irish alone would save that republic. Women begged for the regimental badges to pin on their breasts. In turn they offered delicacies of all kinds to the soldiers. For the first time in a hundred years the British uniform was seen on French soil. Then it represented an enemy, now a comrade in arms. The bond of union was sealed at a midnight military mass, celebrated by English-speaking priests, for British and French Catholic soldiers at Camp Malbrouch round the Colonne de la Grande Armée. The two names recalled the greatest of British and French victories—Blenheim, Ramillies, and Oudenarde, Ulm, Austerlitz, and Jena.

Meanwhile, officers of the French General Staff had journeyed to London to confer with the British General Staff regarding the camping and alignment of the British troops. Meanwhile, also, the British reserves and territorials were called to the colors. The latter comprised the militia, infantry and artillery, and the volunteer yeomanry cavalry, infantry and artillery. The militia was the oldest British military force, officered to a great extent by retired regular army men, its permanent staffs of noncommissioned officers were from the regular army, and it was under

the direct control of the Secretary of State for War. The volunteer infantry, artillery, and yeomanry cavalry were on a somewhat different basis, more nearly resembling the American militia, but the British militia were linked with regular-line battalions. The reserves, militia and volunteers, added approximately 350,000 well-trained men for immediate home defense.

On Sunday, August 17, 1914, it was officially announced that the whole of the British Expeditionary Army had landed in France. Conferences between the British and French General Staffs resulted in the British army being concentrated first at Amiens. From that point it was to advance into position as the left wing of the united French and British armies, though controlled by their separate commanders.

The French Fifth Army had already moved to hold the line of the River Sambre, with its right in touch with Namur. Cavalry patrols had been thrown forward to Ligny and Gembloux, where they skirmished with uhlans. Charleroi was made French headquarters. It was the center of extensive coal-mining and steel industry. Pit shafts and blast furnaces dominated the landscape. Historically it was the ground over which Blücher's Fourth Army Corps marched to the support of the British at Waterloo. Now the British were supporting the French upon it against their former ally.

On Thursday, August 20, 1914, the British took up their position on the French left. Their line ran from Binche to Mons, then within the French frontier stretched westward to Condé. From Mons to Condé it followed the line of the canal, thus occupying an already constructed barrier. Formerly Condé was regarded as a fortress of formidable strength, but its position was not held to be of value in modern strategy. Its forts, therefore, had been dismantled of guns, and its works permitted to fall into disuse. But the fortress of Maubeuge lay immediately in rear of the British line. In rear again General Sordet held a French cavalry corps for flank actions. In front, across the Belgian frontier, General d'Amade lay with a French brigade at Tournai as an outpost.

Before proceeding to British headquarters, General French held a conference with General Joffre, Commander in Chief of all the French armies. Until the outbreak of the war, General Joffre was practically unknown to the French people. He was no popular military idol, no boulevard dashing figure. But he had seen active service with credit, and had climbed, step by step, with persevering study of military science into the council of the French General Staff. As a strategist his qualities came to be recognized as paramount in that body. A few years previously he had been intrusted with the reorganization of the French army, and his plans accepted. Therefore, when war with Germany became a certainty, it was natural the supreme command of the French army should fall to General Joffre.

CHAPTER VI

CAMPAIGNS IN ALSACE AND LORRAINE

THE French staff apparently had designed a campaign in Upper Alsace and the Vosges, but the throwing of a brigade from Belfort across the frontier on the extreme right of their line on August 6 would seem to have been undertaken chiefly with a view of rousing patriotic enthusiasm. French aeroplane scouts had brought in the intelligence that only small bodies of German troops occupied the left bank of the Rhine. Therefore the opportunity was presented to invade the upper part of the lost province of Alsace—a dramatic blow calculated to arouse the French patriotic spirit. Since the Germans had expended hardly any effort in its defense, leaving, as it were an open door, it may have been part of the strategic idea of their General Staff to draw a French army into that region, with the design of inflicting a crushing defeat. Thus French resistance in the southern Vosges would have been weakened, the capture of Belfort, unsupported by its field army, a probability, and a drive beyond into France by the German forces concentrated at Neubreisach made trium-

phant. Doubtless the French General Staff fully grasped the German intention, but considered a nibble at the alluring German bait of some value for its sentimental effect upon the French and Alsatians. Otherwise the invasion of Upper Alsace with a brigade was doomed at the outset to win no military advantage.

On August 7, 1914, the French dispersed a German outpost intrenched before Altkirch. Some cavalry skirmishing followed, which resulted in the French gaining possession of the city. As was to be expected, the citizens of Altkirch welcomed the French with enthusiasm. The following morning the French were permitted an uncontested advance to Mülhausen. That such an important manufacturing center as Mülhausen should have remained unfortified within striking distance of the French frontier, that the French entered it without being compelled to fire a shot, was a surprise to every one with the probable exception of the German and French General Staffs.

The citizens of Mülhausen repeated the joyous ovation bestowed on the French troops in Altkirch. The French uniform was hailed as the visible sign of deliverance from German dominion, and the restoration of the lost province to their kindred of the neighboring republic. The climax of this ebullition was reached in a proclamation issued by direction of General Joffre. "People of Alsace," it ran, "after forty years of weary waiting, French soldiers again tread the soil of your native country. They are the pioneers in the great work of redemption. What emotion and what pride for them! To complete the work they are ready to sacrifice their lives. The French nation with one heart spurs them forward, and on the folds of their flag are inscribed the magical names Liberty and Right. Long live France! Long live Alsace!"

During August 8, 1914, some intermittent fighting went on in the vicinity of Mülhausen, which seems to have given the French general in command the impression that the Germans were not eager for a counterattack. In turn the Germans may well have been puzzled that a French brigade instead of an army was thrown into Upper Alsace for the bait of Mülhausen. Possibly they waited a little for the main body, which did not come.

Sunday, August 8, 1914, revealed the Germans in such over-

powering strength, that the French were left no other choice than to beat a hasty retreat. They accordingly fell back upon Altkirch, to intrench a few miles beyond their own border. Thus ended the French initial offensive. In military reckoning it achieved little of value.

The French plan of campaign was dominated by another motive than pure strategy. From the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 came the patriotic heritage of a redemption of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Whatever the confusion of French politics was otherwise, no party dared to set aside the attainment of this hope in every French breast. The statue of Strassburg, the capital of Lorraine, in the Place de la Concorde at Paris, was every year the object of a mourning demonstration. Its draped figure and crêpe-tied wreaths proclaimed to the Germans, and everyone else, what France demanded of her statesmen. Consequently the French General Staff had ever before them that order of the day from the French people. It was never permitted to be absent from their minds. The French General Staff, therefore, made their plan to recapture the lost French territory up to the left bank of the Rhine as their main offensive at the opening of hostilities with the Germans.

It was not "On to Berlin" as in 1870, but Alsace and Lorraine was glowingly written upon the face of every French reservist when he marched silently but with a supreme hope to "somewhere at the front." To him there was but a single front—the German frontier line running along the ridge of the Vosges Mountains from the Swiss border to the Ardennes, separating France from Alsace and Lorraine.

The Germans knew that Belfort with its field army was impregnable. So long as the French maintained that situation at Belfort, a German drive by that road into France was impossible. While the Germans had left their back door open at Altkirch, they were in great strength all along the right bank of the Rhine, stretching from Neubreisach southward by way of Colmar to Strassburg.

The plan of the French General Staff, therefore, was to mass her armies along the line of the Vosges, protected on the right

and left flanks by the great fortresses of Belfort and Longwy, for a grand and patriotically inspiring drive on Metz, Strassburg, and Colmar. Doubtless every mile of the way, every hour of the time, was calculated to a fraction. Granted, the Germans did occupy Luxemburg and threaten Longwy on their left, or invade Belgium, so long as Liege and Namur held out the Germans would hardly dare to venture far beyond those fortresses. Brialmont was recognized as a great military engineer, the successor of Vauban. Up till the outbreak of war there was not much reason to doubt the resisting strength of his work. In fact we have seen how two or three of his forts at Liege held Von Kluck in check for days. Had the whole ring of his forts been supported by a field army the armies of Von Kluck and Von Bülow would have been halted almost indefinitely, and those of the Duke of Württemberg and the crown prince compelled to mark time in the Ardennes. That would have provided the French with ample leeway to accomplish some brilliant feat like the capture of Strassburg, and for a space beyond the commencement of war, at any rate, end any danger of a German invasion by way of Luxemburg and Belgium. This is reasoning from the view of the French General Staff, who, in their plan, reckoned on the strength of Liege and Namur to protect their northern frontier from a German attack through Belgium.

Whatever the motive of the French General Staff in the preliminary campaign in Alsace, the campaign in the Vosges, beginning August 10, was undertaken in grim earnest.

Before proceeding to an account of this French offensive of the Vosges, which commenced with a seizure of the passes, occupying from August 10 to August 15, 1914, we might appropriately glance at the field of operations in the Ardennes on the French left. Here, during the above period, something in the nature of a victory was granted to the French arms—an inspiration to greater things in Alsace-Lorraine.

On August 13, 1914, the German Crown Prince, commanding the Fourth Army, advanced from Luxemburg into the southern Ardennes and captured Neufchâteau. His further objective was to break through the French line somewhere near the historic

ground of Sedan. But at this point some change in the German plan seems to have taken place. From the maze still enveloping the opening events of the war, one can only conjecture a reason which would move such an irrevocable body as the German General Staff to alter a long-fixed plan. Probably, then, the unanticipated strength of Belgian resistance foreshadowed the summoning of reenforcements to Von Kluck's right wing of the whole German army. We have seen, in fact, how he came to be near a desperate need at Bruges, and only the heavy reenforcement of Von Boehn enabled that general to deliver a final defeat to the Belgian field army at Weerde. Whatever the cause of change of plan may have been, important forces attached to or intended for the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and the crown prince were withdrawn to support the armies of Von Kluck and Von Bülow. These forces went to form a unit under General von Hausen, a veteran of Sadowa. This change left the Saxon army of the crown prince with hardly sufficient strength for a main attack on the French line at Sedan, but still formidable enough to feel its way cautiously through the Ardennes to test the French concentration on the Central Meuse's west bank. When the German right had finally settled Liege, the Saxon army could then join in the united great movement on Paris.

Early on the morning of August 15, 1914, a French detachment of half an infantry regiment, thrown into Dinant, was surprised by a mobile Saxon advance force of cavalry, infantry and artillery. Dinant lies across the Meuse eighteen miles south of Namur. It is a picturesque ancient town, the haunt of artists and tourists. In the vicinity are the estates of several wealthy Belgian families, particularly the thirteenth-century château of Walzin, once the stronghold of the Comtes d'Ardennes. A bridge crosses the Meuse at Dinant, which sits mainly on the east bank within shadow of precipitous limestone cliffs. A stone fort more imposing in appearance than modern effectiveness crowns the highest cliff summit overlooking Dinant. The Germans came by way of the east bank to occupy the suburbs. They presently captured the fort and hoisted the German flag. Meanwhile the French took possession of the bridge, being at

a considerable disadvantage from German rifle fire from the cliffs. The solid stone abutments of the bridge, however, enabled the French to hold that position until strong reenforcements arrived early in the afternoon. While French infantry cleared the environs of Germans, their artillery bombarded the fort from the west bank. Their shells played havoc with the old fort defenses, soon compelling its evacuation by the Germans. One of the first French artillery shells blew into shreds the German flag flying triumphantly over the fort, thus depriving the French of the satisfaction of hauling it down. Toward evening the Germans retreated toward the Lesse, followed by the French. In previous wars the forces engaged were of sufficient strength to designate Dinant a battle, but with the vast armies of the present conflict it sinks to the military grade of a mere affair. However, it is called by the French the Battle of Dinant.

We now return to the French great Vosges offensive. A little before August 10, 1914, French airmen had brought in reports that the German Sixth Army under General von Heeringen, with headquarters at Metz, was weak to the extent of being unable to hold that part of Lorraine between the Rhine and Vosges. These airmen had evidently not observed what their brother of the clouds had seen previously in his flight from Belfort—that the Germans were in great strength on the right bank of the Rhine. General von Heeringen was regarded by the German General Staff as among the ablest of their strategists.

Generals de Castelnau and Pau commanded the French armies of Lorraine and Alsace respectively. They promptly threw forward forces to occupy the passes of the Vosges Mountains.

Thus for five days, from August 10 to 15, 1914, the familiar but too conspicuous blue-coated and red-trousered French uniforms advanced up the stream-watered ravines on the west slope, while their artillery climbed to the elevated plateaus. On the German side the descent is more abrupt to the Alsatian plain. From summit spurs distant views can be obtained of spired cities and prosperous townships. In the upland Vosges valleys nestle villages of thrifty peasants, sheltered by leafy woodlands. The Germans had placed weak outposts on their side of the

frontier which the French swept back with little difficulty. Some harder fighting took place in winning the Col de Bonhomme and the Col de Sainte Marie. From Saint Dié they advanced to seize the important pass of Salles. In this they were successful after sweeping it with artillery fire from the commanding plateau of Blaques. A direct route to Strassburg now lay open by the way of the Bruche Valley.

On August 11, 1914, the Germans moved to counter these operations. It may have been that they were merely maneuvering for position. The French advancing from Montmedy drove back the crown prince's vanguard from before Spincourt. Also, General de Castelnau's left wing compelled another German force, moving south from Blamont, to retreat to its base at Metz. Similarly the French again marched through the open German back door at Altkirch to a succession of minor victories. They captured Dannemaire and Thann to thrust the Germans back upon the Swiss frontier.

On August 17, 1914, Saarburg, on the railway between Strassburg and Metz, fell to the French. Mülhausen was reoccupied, together with twenty-four guns and prisoners. Colmar appeared to be within the French grasp.

By August 19, 1914, the French field commanders seemed to possess every reason to send triumphant bulletins to Paris, to rouse wild enthusiasm among the citizens. London applauded. Allied partisans everywhere echoed the cry "Vive la France," and prophesied that the French flag would presently be carried across the Rhine, not without display of reason. The French were in possession of nearly the whole of Upper Alsace, they could almost touch the Rhine, and the Lorraine army's left wing had occupied a conspicuous advantage between Saarburg and Château Salins, threatening Metz. The joy in Paris was reflected in Alsace. The citizens welcomed the renaming of their towns and the establishment of French civil government. But it was all too easily accomplished—considering the heavy bodies of troops on the right bank of the Rhine observed by the first French airscout from Belfort.

Doubtless sometime during August 20-21, 1914, these reserves

were unostentatiously thrown across to the left bank to reenforce General von Heeringen on a prepared plan. Presently a German army in full force moved from Metz and struck at the French left. It advanced with its right wing touching Pont-à-Mousson, its center on the line Salins-Deuse, and its left resting on the railway beyond Luneville in the direction of Saarburg. A force was detached from this latter wing which promptly drove the French out of Saarburg. The German main counter-attack was delivered on the 21st. The whole French left wing was driven back, crumpled and routed. The French were taken by surprise at this sudden and unexpected appearance of the German army in overwhelming numbers. Confusion among the corps commanders added to their desperate situation. The Germans captured thousands of prisoners, whole batteries of artillery, together with quantities of commissariat and transport. The French left was thus flung in retreat behind the River Meurthe, relinquishing the Vosges northern passes to the Germans.

On August 22, 1914, the Germans drove the French out of Luneville and hurled them back on Nancy. Similarly the German center forced the French center to retreat across the Vosges to a new line running from Mülhausen to Nancy. General Pau still held Mülhausen and a part of Upper Alsace, together with the extremity of the Lower Vosges, but it was doubtful how soon he might not be compelled to fall back on Belfort. Thus ended the French great offensive of the Vosges.

CHAPTER VII

SIEGE AND FALL OF NAMUR

WHEN the Germans occupied Brussels on August 20, 1914, we observed that corps after corps did not enter the city, but swept to the south. This was Von Kluck's left wing moving to attack the Allies on the Sambre-Mons front. The forces which

passed through Brussels were Von Kluck's center, advancing south by east to fall in line beside the right wing, which had mainly passed betwen Brussels and Antwerp to the capture of Bruges and Ghent. The whole line when re-formed on the French frontier would stretch from Mons to the English Channel —the great right wing of the German armies.

Meanwhile, Von Bülow's second army had advanced up the valley of the Meuse, with its right sweeping the Hisbaye uplands. Some part of this army may have been transported by rail from Montmedy. Its general advance in columns was directed chiefly upon the Sambre crossings. As Von Kluck's wide swing through Belgium covered a greater distance, Von Bülow's army was expected to strike the Allies some twenty-four hours earlier. Its march, therefore, was in the nature of an onrush.

But Von Bülow was now in the full tide of fighting strength—an amazing spectacle to chance or enforced witnesses. Well may the terrified peasants have stood hat in hand in the midst of their ruined villages. Any door not left open was immediately broken down and the interior searched. Here and there a soldier could be seen carrying a souvenir from some wrecked château. But for the most part everyone fled from before its path, leaving it silent and abandoned. The field gray-green uniforms were almost invisible in cover, in a half light, or when advancing through mist. No conceivable detail seemed to have been overlooked. Each man carried a complete equipment down to handy trifles, the whole weighed to the fraction of an ounce, in carefully estimated proportions.

But this was not enough. Waiting for each column to pass were men with buckets of drinking water, into which the soldiers dipped their aluminum cups. Temporary field post offices were established in advance, so that messages could be gathered in as the columns passed. Here and there were men to offer biscuits and handfuls of prunes. In methodical, machine-like progress came the ammunition wagons, commissariat carts, field kitchens, teams of heavy horses attached to pontoons, traction engines hauling enormous siege guns, motor plows for excavating trenches,

aeroplanes, carriages containing surgeons, automobiles for the commanders, and motor busses in which staff officers could be seen studying their maps. On some of these vehicles were chalked Berlin-Paris. No branch of the service was absent, no serviceable part if it overlooked—not even a complement of grave diggers. It moved forward always at an even pace, as if on parade, with prearranged signals passed down the line when there was any obstacle, a descent or bend in the road.

The tramp of many thousands cast into the atmosphere clouds of fine dust, but even those in rear marched through it as if their lungs were made of steel. No permission was granted to open out for the circulation of air, though it was the month of August. It is safe to assert there was not a single straggler in Von Bülow's army. At the first sign of it he was admonished with a vigor to deter his comrades. Discipline was severely maintained. At every halt the click of heels, and rattle of arms in salute went on down the line with the sharp delivery of orders.

On Wednesday, August 12, 1914, the town of Huy, situated midway between Liege and Namur, was seized. It possessed an old citadel, but it was disarmed, and used now only as a store-house. Some Belgian detachments offered a slight resistance at the bridge, but were speedily driven off. The capture of Huy gave the Germans control of the railway from Aix-la-Chapelle to France, though broken at Liege by the still standing northern forts. But they secured a branch line of more immediate service, running from Huy into Central Belgium.

On August 15, 1914, Von Bülow's vanguard came within sight of Namur. Before evening German guns were hurling shells upon its forts. Began then the siege of Namur. Namur, being the second fortress hope of the Allies—the pivot upon which General Joffre had planned to swing his army into Belgium in a sweeping attack upon the advancing Germans—a brief survey of the city and fortifications will be necessary. The situation of the city is not as imposing as that of Liege. For the most part it sits on a hillside declivity, to rest in the angle formed by the junction of the Sambre and Meuse. It is a place of some historic

and industrial importance, though in the latter respect not so well known as Liege. To the west, however, up the valley of the Sambre, the country presents the usual features of a mining region—pit shafts, tall chimneys issuing clouds of black smoke, and huge piles of unsightly débris. While away to the north stretches the great plain of Central Belgium, southward the Central Meuse offers a more picturesque prospect in wooded slopes rising to view-commanding hilltops. Directly east, the Meuse flows into the precipitous cut on its way to Liege.

But in Belgian eyes the fame of Namur lay to a great extent in its being the second of Brialmont's fortress masterpieces. Its plan was that of Liege—a ring of outer detached forts, constructed on the same armor-clad cupola principle. At Namur these were nine in number, four major forts and five *fortins*. The distance between each fort was on the average two and a half miles, with between two and a half to five miles from the city as the center of the circumference.

Facing Von Bülow's advance, fort Cognlée protected the Brussels railway, while the guns of Marchovelette swept the space between it and the left bank of the Meuse. In the southwest angle formed by the Meuse, forts Maizeret, Andoy and Dave continued the ring. Again in the angle of the Sambre and Meuse forts St. Héribert and Malonne protected the city. North of the Sambre, forts Suarlée and Emines completed the circle.

In the emergency Namur possessed one advantage over Liege. The resistance of Liege gave Namur due warning of the German invasion, and some days to prepare for attack. General Michel was in command of the garrison of Namur, which comprised from 25,000 to 30,000 men. Doubtless reports had come to him of the situation at Liege. He immediately set to work to overcome the cause of the failure of Brialmont's plan at Liege, by constructing trenches between the forts, protected by barbed wire entanglements, and mines in advance of the German approach. As his circumference of defense was less than that of Liege, his force promised to be capable of a more prolonged resistance.

Besides the Allies were close at hand. Only eighteen miles

separated him from strong detachments of French infantry and artillery at Dinant. As we have seen French cavalry had been thrown forward as far as Gembloux on the road to Brussels, but ten miles to the northeast of Namur. Somewhere between that place and Charleroi French Chasseurs d'Afrique had advanced to occupy outpost positions. His position appeared by no means hopeless—considerably better than the unsupported field army at Liege. The armor of his forts was calculated to withstand the 36-lb. shells of the heaviest German fieldpieces, but comparatively slight damage was anticipated from the known heavier howitzers. If the Germans purposed to assault Namur in mass formation, as they had done at Liege, General Michel had every reason to feel confident he could repulse them with tremendous losses.

But the Germans had learned a severely taught lesson at Liege. They had no intention of repeating those tactics. Behind a remarkable screen of secrecy, they managed to conceal from General Michel—as they did from the Allies—the existence of their enormous siege guns. Whether they brought into action at Namur their famous 42-centimeters, capable of throwing a shell of high explosive power weighing 2,500 lbs., is uncertain. In fact, it is still doubtful where they were first fired at the allied enemy. Two are said to have assisted in the final destruction of the northern forts of Liege, and two were seen rolling over the field of Waterloo. The Germans remained silent upon the subject, and nothing definite about their first discharge was disclosed. But unquestionably their fire was capable of demolishing into ruin any fort on earth within a short period. It is certain, however, the Germans brought against Namur their 28-centimeter guns, and probably some of 21-centimeter caliber. These artillery weapons were quite formidable enough to reduce the Namur forts. The former threw a shell of 750 pounds from a range of three miles—beyond the reach of the Namur guns. The latter projected shells of 250 pounds. The Germans are said to have employed thirty-two of the heavier caliber guns, and a large number of 21-centimeter.

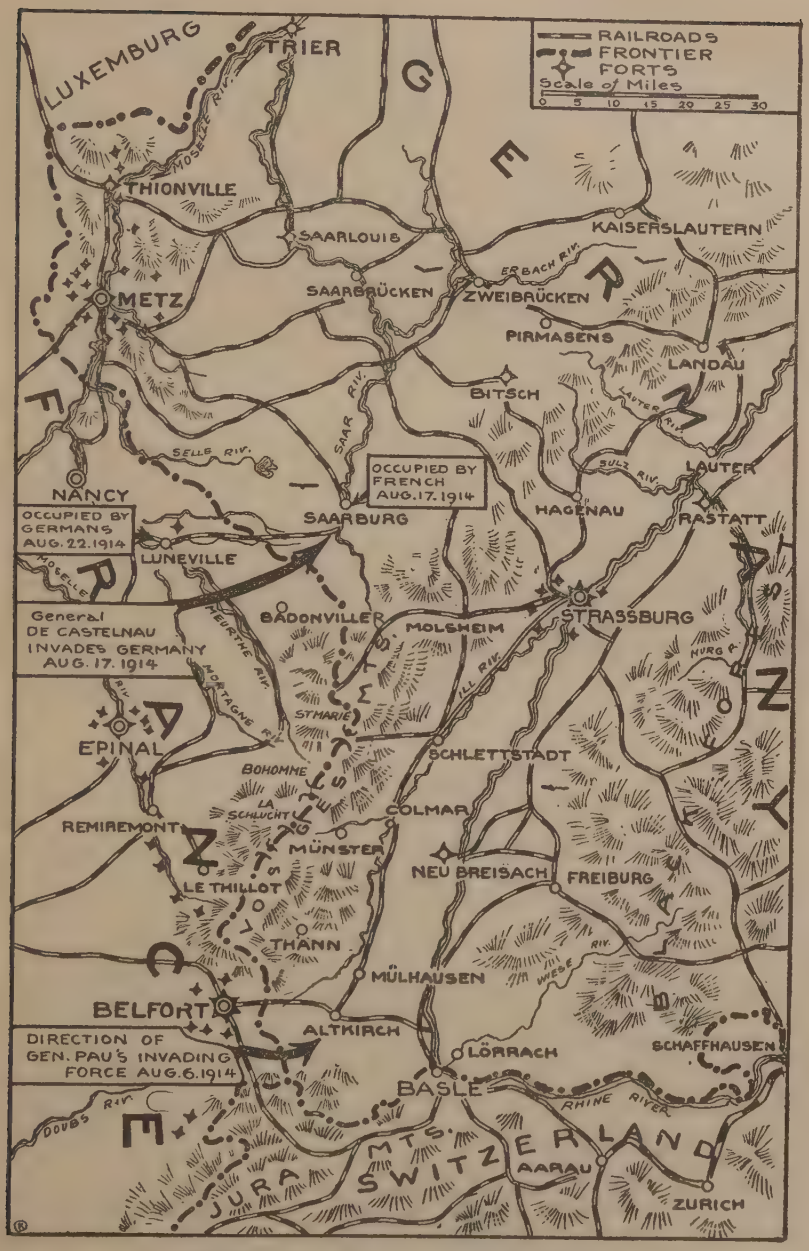
Thus Namur was doomed before the bombardment commenced.

Von Bülow's left wing advanced up the Meuse north bank from Huy, some part of it crossing to the south bank at Ardenne, where it came in touch with the Saxon army.

At sundown of August 20, 1914, Von Bülow was in position before Namur, three miles from its defenses. Darkness fell upon a hot and sultry August atmosphere. Presently the flashes and boom of the German guns began a bombardment of the trenches between forts Cognelée and Marchovelette. It continued through the night. But the Belgian fortress guns were outranged. It would have been a mere waste of ammunition to reply. Neither could the Belgian infantry venture on a counterattack, for the Germans were clearly observed in overwhelming strength. At the outset the Germans devoted their efforts to clearing the trenches of the Belgian infantry, leaving the forts for subsequent demolition. The unfortunate Belgian infantry, therefore, could do nothing but fire intermittent rifle volleys, without any effect upon the Germans. They bravely bore this storm of shells for ten hours. Not a man who lifted his head above the German machine gun-swept parapets but was not instantly killed or wounded. Thus the majority of the officers were killed, and the ranks within the trenches decimated.

Toward morning on August 21, 1914, the Belgians could stand the tornado of death no longer. The demoralized troops fled from the trenches, leaving the gap between forts Cognelée and Marchovelette open. The Germans then opened fire on the forts. In comparison with the new German siege howitzers, the old-fashioned Belgian guns proved to be weak weapons. The tremendous pounding of the German shells not only smashed the fort cupolas, and crumpled into ruin the interior stone and steel protective armor, but quickly put the Belgian guns out of action. Thus while fort Maizeret received some 1,200 German shells at the speed of twenty to the minute, it was able to reply with only ten shots. Forts Marchovelette and Maizeret were the first to fall. Seventy-five men of the Marchovelette garrison were found dead amid its ruins—nearly its total complement.

Early on Friday morning of August 21, 1914, forts Andoy, Dave, St. Héribert and Malonne were subjected to a similar



FRENCH INVASION OF ALSACE-LORRAINE

furious bombardment. After three hours of the cannonade Andoy, Dave and St. Héribert surrendered. During the morning the Germans thrust a force into the southern angle of the Sambre and Meuse. Here the Belgian infantry offered a vigorous resistance. It was hoped that the French at Dinant would hasten to their relief. But Dinant was for the second time within a few days the scene of conflict. Some 6,000 French Turcos and artillery did arrive, but too late to be of use in helping to save Namur. Shells now began to drop in the city while aeroplanes flung down bombs. A thunderstorm rumbled in combination with the continuous roar of the German guns. A panic took hold of the citizens. Distracted men, women and children huddled together in spellbound terror, or sought the shelter of their cellars. The more superstitious pronounced this to be the end of all things, from the eclipse of the sun which darkened the sky. Fort Malonne succumbed sometime during the afternoon of August 21, 1914.

As at Liege, with General Leman, so in Namur General Michel foresaw the city and forts' fate was imminent. Only the northwest forts Suarlée, Emines and Cognelée held out. The Belgians and French had been defeated by the Germans in the angle of the Sambre and Meuse. The horizon revealed no sign of a French army advancing. General Michel, therefore, decided upon the evacuation of the city by the Belgian infantry. It was successfully accomplished, though even more in the nature of a flight than at Liege. But General Michel went with them, instead of remaining, like General Leman, to fight the defense of his fortress to the last.

The retreating Belgians on August 22, 1914, had some adventurous wandering before them. They had first to cut their way through a body of German troops, then to become involved with a French force near Charleroi. It took them seven days to reach Rouen by way of Amiens. There they were embarked for sea transport to Ostend. At Ostend, they joined the main Belgian army after its retreat from Antwerp.

On Sunday morning, August 23, 1914, the Germans began the bombardment of Fort Suarlée. This fort repeated the heroic

resistance of Fort Boncelles at Liege. It held out until the afternoon of August 25. It was apparently then blown up by the explosion of its own magazine, thus again repeating the end of Fort Loncin at Liege. Meantime the Germans had succeeded in reducing Forts Cognelée and Emines.

The Germans entered Namur on the afternoon of August 23, 1914. There seems to have been some oversight in the plan, for the advance guard found themselves under fire of their own guns directed upon the citadel and the Grande Place. This, however, was speedily rectified. Their behavior was much the same as at Louvain and Brussels. They marched in with bands playing and singing patriotic songs. Proclamations were at once issued warning the citizens not to commit any hostile act. The inhabitants were far too cowed to contemplate anything but submission. Good discipline was preserved, and though the city took fire that night there is nothing to show it was from German design. The citizens were induced to come forth from their cellars and hiding places to reopen the cafés and shops.

General von Bülow entered Namur on Monday morning August 24, 1914. He was accompanied by Field Marshal Baron von der Goltz, recently appointed Governor General of Belgium. Previous to the former Balkan War he had been employed in reorganizing the Turkish army. An onlooker in Namur thus describes the German Field Marshal:—"An elderly gentleman covered with orders, buttoned in an overcoat up to his nose, above which gleamed a pair of enormous spectacles."

General Michel attributed his defeat to the German siege guns. The fire was so continuous upon the trenches that it was impossible to hold them, and the forts simply crumpled under the storm of shells. But back of General Michel's plea the allied Intelligence Departments lacked efficiency or energy, or both, in not gaining more than a hint, at any rate, of the enormous German siege guns until they were actually thundering at the gates.

CHAPTER VIII

BATTLE OF CHARLEROI

TOWARD the end of the third week of August, 1914, the atmosphere of every European capital became tense with the realization that a momentous crisis was impending. It was known that the French-British armies confronted German armies of equal, if not of superior strength. In Paris and London the military critics wrote optimistically that the Germans were marching into a trap.

The British army had arrived at the front in splendid fighting trim. It was difficult to restrain the impetuous valor of the French soldiers. The skies were bright and there was confidence that the Germans would unquestionably meet with a crushing defeat. Let us glance at the line of the French and British armies stretched along the Belgian frontier. It ran from within touch of Namur up the right bank of the Sambre, through Charleroi to Binche and Mons, thence by way of the coal barge canal just within the French frontier to Condé. For the choice of a great battle ground there was nothing particularly attractive about it in a military sense.

There is evidence to show in an official communiqué from General Joffre published on August 24, 1914, that it was intended to be merely the left wing of a gigantic French battle offensive—on the adopted German plan—from Condé to Belfort. "An army," runs the communiqué, "advancing from the northern part of the Woevre and moving on Neufchâteau is attacking the German forces which have been going through the Duchy of Luxemburg and are on the right bank of the Samoy. Another army from the region of Sedan is traversing the Belgian Ardennes and attacking the German forces marching between the Lesse and the Meuse. A third army from the region of Chimay has attacked the German right between the Sambre and the Meuse. It is supported by the English army from the region of Mons."

These attacks comprised chiefly the battle of Dinant and cavalry skirmishing, but the purpose of General Joffre was otherwise made plain in throwing advance French troops across the Belgian frontier into Ligny and Gembloux on the road to a recapture of Brussels. This we have previously noted in another connection. The rout of the French army in Lorraine, however, put an end to the grand Condé-Belfort offensive.

Thus the Namur-Condé line became a main defensive position instead of an offensive left wing sweep through Belgium upon Germany. As such it was well enough—if its pivot on the fortress of Namur held secure. Liege had already proved its vulnerability, but it would seem that the French General Staff joined with General Michel, the Commander of Namur, in believing the Namur forts would give a better account. The French General Staff were informed of the approximate strength of the advancing armies of Von Kluck and Von Bülow, and had nothing to fear from inferiority in numbers. The staff never gave out the strength of their forces, but there is reason for believing the great armies were nearly equally matched after mobilization—about 1,200,000 men.

Let us now see what was developing in the Ardennes away to the French right. It has been established that woods, particularly in summer, form the best cover from the observation or attacks of airmen. The spreading, leafy boughs are difficult to penetrate visually from a height of even a few hundred feet, at least to obtain accurate information of what is transpiring beneath.

French air scouts brought in correct information that they had seen the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince massed along the southern Luxemburg and Belgian forest region. But under the foliage there was another army unseen—that of General von Hausen. The French moved their Fifth Army up to position on the line of the Sambre. They advanced their Third Army, commanded by General Ruffey, upon Luxemburg, and their Fourth Army under General de Langle de Cary across the River Semois to watch the Meuse left bank and gain touch with General Lanzerac. General de Cary came from Sedan,

throwing out detachments upon the Meuse left bank. These operations were to confront the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince.

But the French apparently knew nothing of the movements of the army of General von Hausen. Their air scouts either could not distinguish it from the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and the crown prince, amid the forest of the Ardennes, or they did not observe it at all. To the army of General von Hausen there clings a good deal of mystery. When last noted by us, previous to the minor battle of Dinant, it had been formed by forces drawn from the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince. Ostensibly at that time, it was destined to support, as a separate field force, the armies of Von Kluck and Von Bülow.

Possibly the Germans had begun to doubt how long Liege could hold out. Von Kluck was compelled to mark time in his impetuous march on Central Belgium. His losses had been heavy. Support in strength seemed urgent. But this need passed as the Liege forts fell one after the other under the fire of the German siege guns. General von Hausen was released for action elsewhere. Thus we may assume, he was ordered to follow the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince down through the Ardennes to strike the Meuse south of Namur. By this time he had been substantially reenforced. Now under his command were the complete Twelfth and Nineteenth Corps, and the Eleventh Reserve Corps. Also a cavalry division of the Prussian Guard, with some other detachments of cavalry. His Eleventh Reserve Corps were Hessians, the Twelfth and Nineteenth Corps were Saxons. The latter two corps were regarded as among the best in the German army. In the Franco-Prussian War they fought with conspicuous bravery through every battle in which they were engaged. They won the battle for Prussia at Gravelotte by turning the French right and capturing St. Privat. They marched to Sedan under the crown prince—subsequently the Emperor Frederick—to occupy the first line in the hard fighting of the Givonne Valley. During the siege of Paris they occupied a part of the German northern line, finally to march in triumph

into Paris. This infantry and cavalry of the Prussian Guard stiffened Von Hausen's force into an army of battle strength.

We have thus two factors to bear in mind with regard to the French defensive position at Charleroi—the resisting power of the Namur forts, and the unknown, to the French, proximity of Von Hausen's army.

However substantial was the measure of reliance that the French General Staff and General Michel placed on the Namur forts, evidently General von Bülow regarded them as little more than passing targets for his siege guns. He seemed to have made a comparatively simple mathematical calculation of almost the number of shells necessary to fire, and the hours to be consumed in reducing the Namur forts to masses of débris.

We can picture General von Bülow as he sat in the motor car with Marshal von der Goltz—the old gentleman with an overcoat buttoned up to his nose in August, and huge spectacles. Doubtless discussion ran mainly upon the impending attack of their Second Army on the French right. Emphasis would have been laid on the positions of the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince advancing away to their left upon the forces of the French Generals Ruffey and de Cary. But there was apparently a German gap here between Von Bülow's army and the armies of the Duke of Württemberg and crown prince, though we noticed previously Von Bülow's army came in touch with Saxon troops half way between Huy and Namur, when a detachment of Von Bülow's left wing was thrown across the Meuse at Ardenne. This gap was faced by the French extreme right resting on the southward Namur bend of the Meuse. It was possibly the "trap" military critics of the moment foresaw for the Germans. Quite likely the two German generals Von Bülow and Von der Goltz, chatting in their motor car, referred to this gap, and it is hardly a stretch of imagination to suggest a twinkle in the huge glasses of the old gentleman in the August overcoat, when now and then the name of Von Hausen was mentioned.

The German attack on the French right began early in the morning of Friday, August 21, 1914. A party of German hus-

sars crossed the Meuse, rode through Charleroi, and trotted on toward the Sambre. At first they were mistaken for a British cavalry patrol. Probably the populace in Charleroi were not sufficiently familiar at that time with the British hussar uniform to distinguish it from the German. In all armies hussar uniforms bear a close resemblance. A French officer, however, presently detected the situation. After a skirmish the German hussars were driven off with the loss of a few killed and wounded. But the raid evidently came out of the gap as a surprise to the French. The citizens were promptly ordered to their homes. Barricades were raised in the streets, and mitrailleuses were placed in sweeping positions. An artillery engagement began at Jemappe, nine miles above Namur on the left bank of the Sambre, between Von Bülow's vanguard and the main French right. Later in the day Von Bülow's vanguard artillery had advanced to open fire on Charleroi and Thuin, seven miles beyond.

On Saturday, August 22, 1914, Von Bülow attacked Charleroi in full strength. As we have seen, he had already practically settled with Namur. Their main assault on Saturday was delivered on the Sambre bridges at Chatelet and Thuin, below and above Charleroi, respectively. Sometime on Saturday they succeeded in crossing to turn Charleroi into one of the most frightful street battle grounds in history. The conflict raged for the possession of iron foundries, glass works, and other factories. The thoroughfares were swept by storms of machine-gun fire. Tall chimneys toppled over and crashed to the ground, burying defenders grouped near under piles of débris. Desperate hand-to-hand encounters took place in workshops, electric-power stations, and manufacturing plants. The normal whir of machinery, now silent, was succeeded by the crack and spitting of continuous rifle fire.

The French-Turco and Zouave troops fought with savage ferocity, with gleaming eyes, using bayonets and knives to contest alleys and passageways. House doors were battered in to reach those firing from upper windows. Roofs and yard walls were scaled in chase of fleeing parties. The Germans were driven out of Charleroi several times, only to return in stronger

force. Similarly with the French. With each change of victors, the losing side turned to bombard with a torrent of artillery shells the war-engulfed city.

At nightfall on August 22, 1914, Charleroi burst into flames. A dread and significant glow fell upon the sky. Absent were the usual intermittent flare of blast furnaces. The greater part of Charleroi had become a heap of ruins. Those of its citizens still alive cowered in holes or corners for shelter.

The battle of Charleroi went on throughout the night. Early on the morning of Sunday, August 23, 1914, Von Hausen swept down through the gap between the armies of Von Bülow and the Duke of Württemberg. He crossed the Meuse, drove from before him the French detachments watching it, and advanced to attack the rear of the French right.

Von Hausen took the French at Charleroi completely by surprise. At the moment they could comprehend neither where he came from nor the measure of his strength. But he was in army force.

The French were compelled to withdraw their right from Charleroi. Von Hausen seized the advantage to hurl his forces upon their rear, while Von Bülow thundered in assault more vigorously than ever on the French front. A powerful force was hurled upon them from an unexpected direction. Presently the retreat of the French Fifth Army was threatened by the two Saxon corps of Von Hausen's army, pressing on the French right flank and rear. In this emergency the retirement of the French Fifth Army appears to have been undertaken with spontaneous realization of utmost danger. It gave way before the attacks of Von Bülow and Von Hausen to move southward, leaving their British left wing without information of defeat.

CHAPTER IX

BATTLE OF MONS

ON Friday, August 21, 1914, the British force began to take position on the French left, forming the line Binche-Mons-Condé. When finally concentrated it comprised the First and Second Army Corps, and General Allenby's cavalry division. The regiments forming the cavalry division were the Second Dragoon Guards, Ninth Lancers, Fourth Hussars, Sixth Dragoon Guards, with a contingent of the Household Guards. The First Army Corps was given the right of the line from Binche to Mons. It was commanded by Sir Douglas Haig. He was a cavalry officer like the commander in chief, and a comparatively young man for such a responsibility, but had seen active service with credit. His corps was comprised of six guards' battalions. The First Black Watch, Second Munster Fusiliers, The Royal Sussex, North Lancashire, Northamptons, Second King's Royal Rifles, Third West Surreys, The South Wales Borderers, Gloucesters, First Welsh Regiment, Highland Light Infantry, Connaught Rangers, Liverpools, South Staffords, Berkshires, and First King's Royal Rifles. The First Irish Guards went into action for the first time in its history.

The second corps extended from Mons to Condé, commanded by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. General Dorrien was a west of England man, and turning fifty-six. He had seen active service in the Zulu War, Egypt, Sudan, the Chitral Relief Force, and Tirah campaign. He had occupied the positions of adjutant general in India, commander of the Quetta division, and commander in chief at Aldershot. He was recognized as a serious military student, and possessing the approval and confidence of Lord Kitchener. The Second Corps was composed of Royal Irish Rifles, Wiltshires, South Lancashires, Worcesters, Gordons, Royal Scots, Royal Irish, Middlesex, Royal Fusiliers, Northumberland Fusiliers, Royal Scots Fusiliers, Lincolns, Yorkshire Light Infantry, West Kent, West Riding, Scottish Borderers,

Manchesters, Cornwalls, East Surreys, and Suffolks. To the rear Count Gleichen commanded the Norfolks, Bedfords, Cheshires, and Dorsets. On the left of the Second Corps was stationed General Allenby's cavalry.

In passing we may note that the commander in chief of the British forces was a cavalry officer, the commander of the First Army Corps a cavalry officer, and that the cavalry was in comparatively ample force. Von Mackensen of the German force came from that branch of the service. Cavalry officers are excellent soldiers, but their training as such is not promising for the command of modern armies, mainly of infantry and artillery, with other complements. In war much has changed since Waterloo, with the value of cavalry retreating into the background as aeroplanes sweep to the front for scouting and other purposes.

From Binche to Condé the line assigned to the British was approximately twenty-five miles. Their force totaled some 75,000 men with 259 guns. General French, therefore, had 2,500 men to the mile of front. This was an insufficient force, as the usual fighting front for a battalion of a thousand men in defense or in attack is estimated in all armies at about 425 yards. The British brigade of four battalions (4,000 rifles) covers a half-mile front. General French's Third Army Corps having been utilized elsewhere, he was compelled to use his cavalry in four brigades as reserve.

Previous to the German attack on Charleroi, General Joffre still held to his plan of a left-wing attack, or rather a counter-attack after the Germans were beaten. But battles were commencing on other fronts, properly belonging to the general retreat, which made its execution doubtful even in an hour of victory. The capture of Charleroi, of course, dissipated it as a dream. That General French realized the superiority in numbers of Von Kluck's advancing army both in infantry and artillery is nowhere suggested. His airmen had merely brought in the information that the attack would be in "considerable force." The French Intelligence Service were led to believe and informed the British commander that Von Kluck was advancing upon him with only one corps, or two at the most. Some of Gen-

eral French's cavalry scouting as far toward Brussels as Soignes, during the 21st and 22d, confirmed it. But the British proceeded to prepare for attack immediately on taking position. They set to work digging trenches.

While continuing their defensive efforts through Saturday, August 22, 1914, there floated to them a distant rumble from the eastward. Opinions differed as to whether it was the German guns bombarding Namur, or a battle in progress on the Sambre. For the most part British officers and men had but a vague idea of their position, or the progress of the fighting in the vicinity. Even the headquarters staff remained uninformed of the desperate situation developing on the French right at Charleroi.

The headquarters of the British army was at Mons. It lies within what is known as "le Borinage," that is the boring district of Belgium, the coal-mining region. In certain physical aspects it much resembles the same territory of Pennsylvania. Containing one or two larger towns such as Charleroi and Mons, it is sprinkled over with villages gathered near the coal pits. Everywhere trolley lines are to be seen running from the mines to supply the main railways and barge canals.

Formerly the people were of a rough, ignorant and poverty toiling type, but of late years have greatly improved with the introduction of organized labor and education. Previous bad conditions, however, have left their mark in a stunted and physically degenerate type of descendants from the mining population of those times. In contrast to later comers they resemble a race of dwarfs. The men seldom exceed four feet eight inches in height, the women and children appear bloodless and emaciated.

The output of the Borinage coal field exceeds twenty million tons a year. Its ungainly features of shafts, chimneys, and mounds of débris are relieved in places by woodlands, an appearance of a hilly country is presented where the pit mounds have been planted with fir trees. Apart from its mining aspect, Mons is a city of historic importance. It contains a Gothic cathedral and town hall of medieval architectural note. It also, cherishes a special yearly fête of its own on Trinity Sunday, when in the parade of the Limaçon, or snail, the spectacle of St.

George and the Dragon is presented. With great pride the citizens of Mons showed the British soldiers of occupation an ancient cannon, claimed to have been used by their forefathers as an ally of the English at Crecy.

Especially east of Mons, toward Binche, the British line ran through this district. Several of the greatest European battles have been fought in its vicinity—Ramilles, Malplaquet, Jemappe, and Ligny.

The night of Saturday, August 23, 1914, passed peacefully for the British soldiers, still working on their trenches. But distant boom of guns from the east continued to vibrate to them at intervals. Of its portend they knew nothing. Doubtless as they plied the shovel they again speculated over it, wondering and possibly regretting a chance of their having been deprived of the anticipated battle.

Sunday morning, August 24, 1914, dawned brightly with no sign of the enemy. In Mons and the surrounding villages the workmen donned their usual holiday attire, women stood about their doors chatting, children played in the streets. Church bells rung as usual summoning to public worship. General French gathered his generals for an early conference. General Joffre's message on Saturday morning, assured General French of victory, and positively informed him that Von Kluck was advancing upon him with no more than one or two army corps. In testimony of it, General French thus wrote a subsequent official dispatch.

"From information I received from French headquarters, I understood that little more than one or at most two of the enemy's army corps, with perhaps one cavalry division, were in front of my position, and I was aware of no outflanking movement attempted by the enemy" (Von Hausen's advance on the right). "I was confirmed in this opinion by the fact that my patrols encountered no undue opposition in their reconnoitering operations. The observations of my aeroplanes seemed also to bear out this estimate."

To General French, therefore, his position seemed well secured. In the light of it he awaited Von Kluck's attack with confidence. Toward mid-day some German aeroplanes swept up above the

woods in front, and circled over the British line. British marksmen at once fired on the bodies and hawklike wings of the intruders.

Some tense interest was roused among the men as British aeroplanes rose to encounter the German aircraft. It was the first real battle of the sky they had witnessed. General French's cavalry patrols now brought information that the woods were thick with German troops, some of them deploying eastward toward their right at Binche.

At twenty minutes to one the first shots swept from the woods upon the British line. Presently, Von Kluck's main attack developed with great rapidity. The German artillery was brought to the front edge of the woods to hurl a storm of shells on the British trenches. It was returned with equal vigor. But very soon it became apparent to British commanders along the line that the German artillery fire was in far greater volume than what might be expected from two army corps, whose normal complement would be some 340 guns. Instead it was estimated 600 German guns were shortly brought into action.

The battle field was described by the Germans as "an emptiness." The term is intended to emphasize that the old martial display and pomp has completely gone. A grand advance upon each other, with trumpets sounding, banners fluttering, brilliant uniforms, and splendid cavalry charges, was impossible with long range weapons hailing storms of bullets and shells of devastating explosive power. Cover was the all important immediate aim of both attack and defense. In this respect as we have seen, the German gray-green uniform assisted by rendering them almost invisible within shelter of such woods as those before Mons. On the other hand, the brown khaki shade of the British field uniforms—originally designed for the same purpose on the sandy wastes of Egypt and Northern India—became conspicuous upon a green background.

As the battle of Mons developed, the British line of the Condé Canal was swept with German shrapnel. German shells, also, began bursting in the suburbs of Mons and in the near-by villages. Sir Douglas Haig's right thus came under strong fire.

German aeroplanes assisted by dropping smoke bombs over the British positions to give the angle of range for their artillery. Thereupon fights above took place between British and German airmen, while the armies beneath thundered shot and shell upon each other. The Germans came on in massed formation of attack. The British were accustomed to attack in open extended line, and their shooting from any available cover was generally excellent. They could not understand the German attack in such close order that they were mowed down in groups of hundreds.

The German infantry rifle fire, breaking from the shelter of the woods to encounter a stronger British fire than was anticipated, was at first ineffective. As to the mass formation they depended upon overwhelming reserves to take the places of those dead piled in heaps before the British trenches. It was General Grant's "food for powder" plan of attack repeated.

Thus the battle raged upon the entire length of the British line, with repeated advances and retreats on the part of the Germans. Now and then the bodies almost reached the British trenches, and a breach seemed in certain prospect. But the British sprang upon the invaders, bayonet in hand, and drove them back to the shelter of the woods. The Irish regiments, especially, were considered invincible in this "cold steel" method of attack, their national impulsive ardor carrying them in a fury through the ranks of an enemy. But at Mons always the Germans returned in ever greater numbers. The artillery increased the terrible rain of shells. Pen pictures by British soldiers vividly describe the battle somewhat conflictingly.

"They were in solid square blocks, standing out sharply against the skyline, and you couldn't help hitting them. It was like butting your head against a stone wall. . . . They crept nearer and nearer, and then our officers gave the word. A sheet of flame flickered along the line of trenches and a stream of bullets tore through the advancing mass of Germans. They seemed to stagger like a drunken man hit between the eyes, after which they made a run for us. . . . Halfway across the open another volley tore through their ranks, and by this time our artillery began dropping shells around them. Then an officer gave an order and

they broke into open formation, rushing like mad toward the trenches on our left. Some of our men continued the volley firing, but a few of our crack shots were told off for independent firing. . . . They fell back in confusion, and then lay down wherever cover was available. We gave them no rest, and soon they were on the move again in flight. . . . This sort of thing went on through the whole day."

From another view we gather that "We were in the trenches waiting for them, but we didn't expect anything like the smashing blow that struck us. All at once, so it seemed, the sky began to rain down bullets and shells. At first they went wide . . . but after a time . . . they got our range and then they fairly mopped us up. . . . I saw many a good comrade go out."

During the early part of the battle Von Kluck directed his main attack upon the British right, with a furious artillery bombardment of Binche and Bray. This was coincident with the crumpling of the French right at Charleroi by the army of Von Bülow, and its threatened retreat by that of Von Hausen. The retirement of the French Fifth Army, therefore, left General Haig exposed to a strong flank attack by Von Kluck. Confronted with this danger, General Haig was compelled to withdraw his right to a rise of ground southward of Bray. This movement left Mons the salient of an angle between the First and Second British Army Corps. Shortly after this movement was performed, General Hamilton, in command of Mons, found himself in peril of converging German front and flank attacks. If the Germans succeeded in breaking through the British line beyond Mons, he would be cut off and surrounded. General Hamilton informed his superior, General French, of this danger, and was advised in return "to be careful not to keep the troops in the salient too long, but, if threatened seriously to draw back the center behind Mons."

A little after General French had sent General Hamilton this warning, he received a telegram from General Joffre which he describes as "a most unexpected message." General Joffre's telegram conveyed the first news to General French not only that the French Fifth Army had been defeated and was in retreat—

GERMAN HOSTS INVADE AND CONQUER BELGIUM

SIEGE GUN · FORTRESSES OF LIEGE, NAMUR, MALINES · VALIANT RESISTANCE BY THE BELGIANS

One of the great siege guns that destroyed the fortresses in Belgium and northern France and made possible the first great drive of the German armies

Copyright, Paul Thompson

This bridge over the Meuse at Liege was blown up by the Belgians to delay the German advance. The German army crossed on pontoon bridges

Copyright, International News Service

Belgian gunners and field gun in action on the firing line between Termond and St. Giles, Belgium

Copyright, American Press Association

The fortress town of Namur, Belgium, whose once impregnable fortifications were shattered in a few days by the great German siege guns

Copyright, American Press Association

The city of Malines Belgium, from which the inhabitants fled as the Germans advanced from Brussels

Copyright, International News Service

A Belgian machine-gun corps taking up their position in a beet field at Lebbeke on learning of the approach of the German invaders

Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

Belgian artillery replying to the fire of the Germans. Though hidden by trees, this battery could be detected by aeroplane scouts

Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

Belgian soldiers intrenched along a railway line. The fine roads and railways of Belgium and France aided the rapid advance of the invaders

tne first intimation even that the French right at Charleroi under General Lanrezac was in peril—but that at least three German army corps were attacking the British. Doubtless the German smashing of General Joffre's planned grand counterattack after the Germans were to be beaten, was disheartening as well as a sore disappointment. General French admirably preserved his courage when finding himself suddenly on the brink of a military catastrophe. Thus far the British left had held their line against the German assault heroically and steadfastly. They might continue to do so, even unsupported by the retreating French, but at the certainty of eventual envelopment and capture.

General French possessed 75,000 men. It was now disclosed that in front Von Kluck was hurling upon him 200,000 men, Von Bülow was hammering on his right, Von Hausen in pursuit of the French threatened his rear, while some 50,000 Germans were enveloping his left. He had no option but to order a retreat. For this he waited until nightfall in the hope of the enemy's attack slackening, to give his men a brief period of rest, and withdraw under cover of darkness. Of its impression on the men a British soldier again writes: "After the last attack we lay down in our clothes to sleep as best we could, but long before sunrise were called out to be told that we had to abandon our position. Nobody knew why we had to go; but like good soldiers we obeyed, without a murmur. The enemy's cavalry, evidently misunderstanding our action, came down on us again in force; but our men behaved very well indeed, and they gave it up as a bad job. . . . In the retreat we picked off their cavalry by the score."

This writer was probably stationed somewhere along the still well-defended left. On the right and center things had been going badly for the British. Toward evening Mons had become untenable. From German batteries massed along the rim of forest a furious storm of shells was launched upon the city. The Germans followed this up with an infantry attack in force on the western suburbs—following much the same tactics as at Charleroi. General Haig, therefore, was compelled to withdraw to the southern part of the city. The Germans pushed after him.

Here the Irish Rifles and the Middlesex regiment made a determined stand, to suffer heavy casualties. For a time they were cut off, and were in danger of capture or annihilation. The Gordon Highlanders charged to their aid. For the moment they drove the Germans back, and rescued their regimental comrades. Night fell to disclose another scene of conflagration. The suburbs of Mons took fire, and surrounding villages sprang into flame from the bursting of shells. By this light the retreat of the British commenced.

The British account of their Battle of Mons needs no official seal to stamp it as a brilliant military performance on the part of the English, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish soldiers, who fought shoulder to shoulder on the line from Binche to Condé. Among the four there is no second. They marched from the field of Mons determined "to fight it out through another day."

Personal acts of courage were numerous in all the armies. The spirit which animated the soldier at Mons is well shown in the act of Lance Corporal Jarvis of the Royal Engineers. For a whole hour he worked on indefatigably and resolutely to destroy a bridge at Jameppes in full observation of the Germans. Then he waited to blow it up in their faces as they began to march upon it. Corporal Jarvis escaped to win the decoration of the Victoria Cross for "conspicuous bravery."

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT RETREAT BEGINS

THE German hosts now stood at the gates of France. It was a mighty spectacle. The soldiery of the Kaiser which had swept their way into Belgium, there to meet the unexpected resistance of the defenders of King Albert, had reached their goal—the French frontier.

About the middle of August, 1914, General Joffre, assigned to the British Expeditionary Force, commanded by Sir John French,

the task of holding Mons against the powerful German advance. The British force formed the left wing of the line of front that stretched for some two hundred miles close to the Belgian frontier. Extending from Arras through the colliery towns of Mons and Charleroi, the extreme western front of the armies was held by General D'Amade at Arras, with about 40,000 reserve territorial troops; by General French, with 80,000 British regulars, at Mons; by the Fourth and Fifth French Army of 200,000 first-line troops, under General Joffre and his staff, near Charleroi; and by a force of 25,000 Belgian troops at Namur. The total allied troops in this field of battle were thus about 345,000 men.

Opposed to them, on the north, were about 700,000 German troops, General von Kluck farthest to the west, Generals von Bülow and Von Hausen around the Belgian fortress of Namur, Grand Duke Albrecht of Württemberg in the neighborhood of Maubeuge, and finally, on the extreme left of the German line, the Army of the Moselle, under Crown Prince Wilhelm.

The position of the allied armies was based on the resisting power of Namur. It was expected that Namur would delay the German advance as long as Liege had done. Then the French line of frontier fortresses—Lille, with its half-finished defenses; Maubeuge, with strong forts and a large garrison; and other strongholds—would form a still more useful system of fortified points for the Allies.

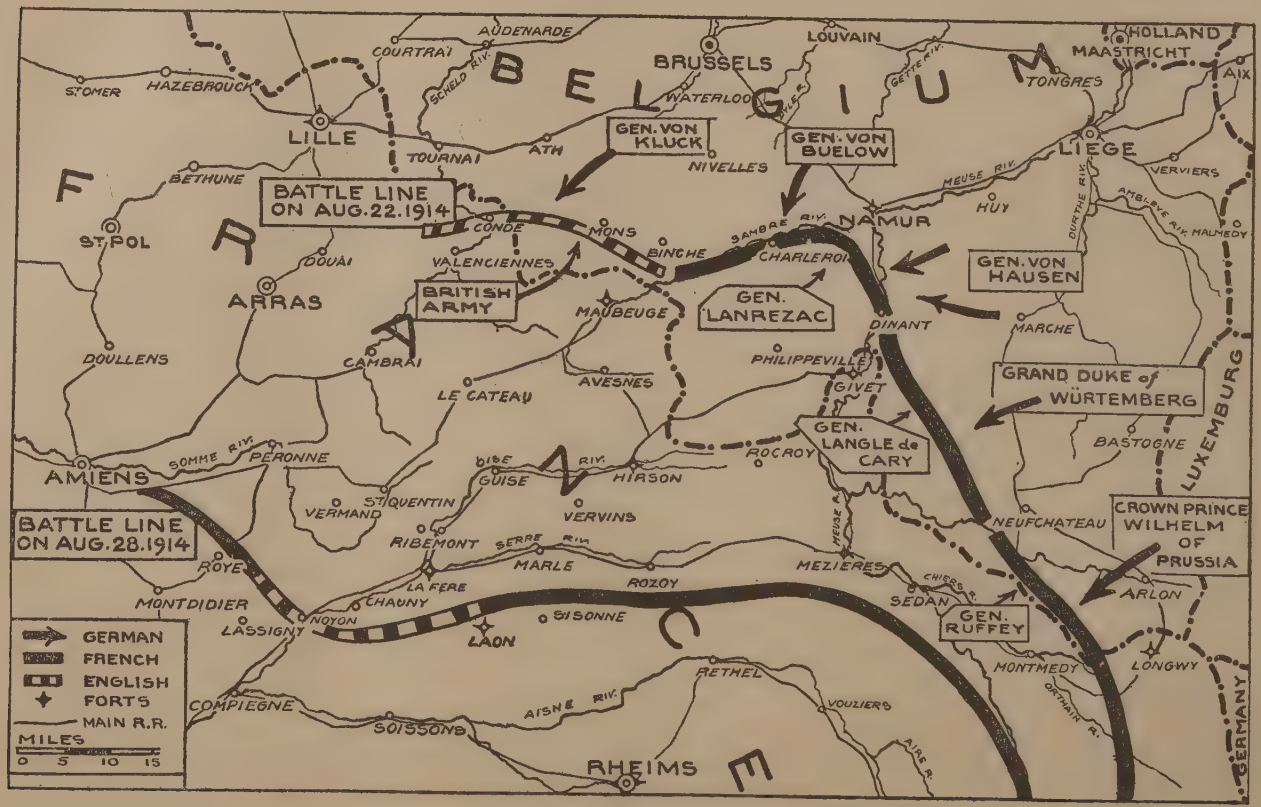
The German staff, however, had other plans. At Liege they had rashly endeavored to storm a strong fortress by a massed infantry attack, which had failed disastrously until their new Krupp siege guns had been brought up. These quickly demolished the defenses. These siege guns, therefore, which had thus fully demonstrated their value against fortifications soon brought about the total defeat of the French offensive, and compelled the Allies to retreat from Belgium and northern France. The Germans lost no time in investing Namur, and on Saturday, as noted above, August 22, 1914, the fortress fell into the invaders' hands.

On the same day, August 22, 1914, the Fifth French Army, under Generals Langle and Ruffey, was enduring the double stress of Von Bülow's army thundering against its front, and Von Hausen's two army corps pressing hard upon its right flank and rear, threatening its line of retreat. Against such terrific odds the French line at Dinant and Givet broke, exposing the flank and rear of the whole army; and by the evening of that day, August 22, the passages of the River Sambre, near Charleroi, had been forced, and the Fifth Army was falling back, contesting every mile of the ground with desperate rear-guard action. The British, meanwhile, defending the Mons position, were in grave danger of being cut off, enveloped, and destroyed.

Sir John French had put his two army corps into battle array. He had about thirty miles of front to defend, with Mons nearly in the center. On the east was the little town of Condé, connecting by a canal with Mons; on the west were the smaller towns of Bray and Binche, the latter about halfway to Charleroi. The First Army Corps, under General Sir Douglas Haig, was deployed from Mons toward Bray; the Second Corps, under General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, was stationed along the Condé-Mons Canal. Guarding Binche was the Fifth Cavalry Brigade, while another body of cavalry, under General Allenby, was kept as a reserve, ready to move to any part of the line that might be threatened.

On Sunday afternoon, August 23, 1914, the full weight of the German onset fell for the first time upon the British. Sir Douglas Haig's front was attacked heavily, and he withdrew his flank to the hills south of Bray. The Fifth Cavalry, halfway to the fallen town of Charleroi, also gave up their position and moved southward. This retirement left Mons a weak place in the battle line, for it then formed a wedge jutting out into the lines of the enemy. Held by the Third Division, under General Hamilton, it was exposed to a raking cross-fire on both sides of the wedge, and to a double attack from either side.

Victorious all along the rest of the allied line, the Germans



BATTLE OF MONS AND RETREAT OF ALLIED ARMIES

now swung out westward in a turning movement against the British, reckoning on an easy victory.

The French meanwhile were in full retreat along the frontier, with the two German armies of the Meuse, flushed with success, pursuing them or menacing their flanks; and another hostile force only two days' march distant also threatening to cut their retreat. In these circumstances the Fifth French Army was unable to help the British on its left at Mons. Hurriedly, desperately, they were fighting their way back, constantly engaging the Germans in pursuit. Their cavalry was soon tired out by charging continually to save guns or infantry, till at last the horses could not move. In fact, it was a question whether the army could save themselves from utter annihilation or be forced to surrender.

In the confusion of retreat the French staff apparently became demoralized, and tidings of the collapse of the Sambre defense on August 22, 1914, were not conveyed to General French until late in the afternoon of Sunday. Then a telegram from General Joffre informed him of the critical situation of the French army, also of the fact that at least three German army corps were advancing against him that very afternoon, while at the same time another corps was threatening his flank from the direction of Tournai. As it afterward appeared, five army corps, with reserves numbering nearly half a million men, were being hurled repeatedly against the British by the German General Staff.

After aeroplane reconnaissance, General French, in order to keep in line with the withdrawing Fifth Army, decided to retire to a safer position resting on the fortress of Maubeuge on the right and extending west to Jenlain, a small town southeast of Valenciennes, on the left. He had already directed that the Mons salient—as a wedge position running into hostile territory is called—should not be held if it were seriously threatened. So, as twilight was beginning to fall on Sunday afternoon, General Hamilton, in obedience to orders dispatched to him scarcely an hour before the receipt of General Joffre's telegram, drew his center back behind the town. At the same time the first stages

of the main retirement began. All heavy transport trains were sent to clear the roads, and a little later the ambulances followed, carrying as many of the wounded as they could accommodate. It was almost midnight before the last outposts withdrew over the canal, where many of them had been firing from loopholes made in the walls of factories.

All that night the British were under the fire of German artillery. In the sultry darkness the red glare of burning villages fired by shells lit up the sky, and here and there along the front there were frequent bursts of rifle fire. In addition to a continual bombardment, which was designed to shake the nerve of the British to keep them sleepless and to wear them out before the next attack, the Germans used powerful searchlights which swept the ground in search of hidden trenches. Wherever these beams of light revealed a trench with men in it a volley of shrapnel followed. The Germans, commanded by Von Kluck, gave their foes no rest in the small hours of Monday morning, August 23, 1914. At sunrise the whole British force stood to arms. To cover the retreat of Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's Second Corps from the line between Mons and Condé, the British commander in chief, who with his staff was at Bavai, resolved to check the enemy's advance upon his right wing by the menace of a counterattack on Binche from the direction of Harmignies; also, to launch General Allenby's cavalry against the enemy who now were endeavoring to turn the left of the line. While these maneuvers were in progress Smith-Dorrien fell back some five miles, and was joined by the newly arrived Nineteenth Infantry Brigade, which had been hurried up from the lines of communication to Valenciennes and was placed at the near-by hamlet of Quarouble.

The attack from Harmignies having served its purpose, it was discontinued, for the two divisions of Sir Douglas Haig's corps were presently on their way southward. Nevertheless, the British force was still in a very precarious position. Von Kluck's troops, having crossed the canal, were in vigorous pursuit, and Smith-Dorrien's new positions from Quarouble to the mining village of Frameries were at best only temporary. Furthermore,

General Hamilton's division, while debouching from Mons, had suffered considerable loss from the enemy.

By nightfall, however, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's corps, retiring under cover of the cavalry, held the position assigned to it between Bavai and Jenlain. It was protected by the cavalry, and by the Nineteenth Infantry Brigade, posted on its flank between Jenlain and the village of Bry. The right wing, under General French, rested on the fortress of Maubeuge, and from Maubeuge to Bavai the ground was held by Sir Douglas Haig's corps.

Had the French Fifth Army, on French's right, been unbroken or able to extend the line of front eastward beyond Maubeuge, there might have been another battle along the frontier. Now it was out of the question. Twenty-four hours before Sir John French learned from General Joffre that the Germans were moving toward his left flank, General D'Amade had become aware of the move of the Second German Corps advancing on Tournai. Underestimating the strength of the advancing Germans, General D'Amade sent a brigade of territorials to defend the town; but after desperate fighting the French brigade, under the Marquis de Villaret, was surrounded, cut off from retreat, and captured. On the same day a British outpost, which Sir John French had moved out toward Tournai to guard against a surprise attack, was driven back to Cambrai. Von Kluck, after occupying Lille, was thus master of the country to the left of the new British position, and could use his greatly superior force to outflank the British line, roll it up from the left, and jam it against Maubeuge.

Sir John French realized the danger of his Maubeuge-Jenlain position, and felt that not a moment must be lost in retiring to another, though, to quote his own dispatch, "the operation was full of danger and difficulty, owing not only to the very superior force in my front, but also to the exhaustion of the troops."

On Monday evening, August 23, 1914, despite his desire to give the wearied troops some opportunity for rest and reorganization, the British commander, realizing the importance of putting a

substantial barrier, such as the Somme or the Oise, between his force and the enemy, gave orders for the retirement to be continued at five o'clock the next morning, August 24, 1914. He had decided upon a new position about the town of Le Cateau, east of Cambrai.

There was great disappointment among the battalions when they learned that, instead of awaiting the Germans on Tuesday morning in the Maubeuge position, the retreat was to continue; but on the whole the men were in good spirits; they felt that, although retreating, they were not defeated, and were only moving to a stronger position which they could hold.

Before dawn, August 25, 1914, the southward march over rough, hilly country was resumed, General Allenby and the cavalry covering the retreat, Sir Douglas Haig with the First Corps and its guns marching to Maroilles and Landrecies by the road along the eastern border of the forest of Mormal, and the Second Corps to the west of it. Two French reserve divisions were on the right of the British army, and a French cavalry corps, under General Sordêt, had been in billets northeast of Landrecies. General French could count on the aid of these two reserve divisions, but not immediately on Sordêt's exhausted cavalry. He might expect some support from the west, where General D'Amade, with two other reserve divisions, was then near Arras.

During August 23 and 24, 1914, the Second German Corps, as has been noted, had been steadily moving from the direction of Tournai to envelop the British left. Farther to the west a German cavalry division and a battalion of infantry with artillery and machine guns had occupied Lille, and had driven the French in rout from Bethune and Cambrai. They had inflicted another severe defeat on the French at Bapaume, and then they had threatened Arras, up to the time of General D'Amade's arrival. Events in the near future were to require his efficient support.

Toward evening of August 25, 1914, after a long, hard day's fighting march over the highroads, in midsummer heat and thundershowers, the Guards Brigade and other regiments of the

Second Corps, wet and weary, arrived at the little market town of Landrecies. Hoping to have a good rest, they were soon billeted in various houses or in bivouacs in the outlying fields, and they were stretching their legs, about ten o'clock at night, when suddenly the alarm was sounded. The Ninth German Corps had stolen down through the Forest of Mormal and surrounded the town.

Advancing from the woods, the German corps was soon pouring into the half-deserted streets, while the Guards Brigade, hastily summoned to action, were doing their utmost to stem the tide. In the main street the German column, advancing in closest order, found their way disputed by British machine guns, which greeted them with deadly salvos. The head of the column was instantly mowed down, but the Teutons came on, doggedly, daringly, rushing to the destruction in their path. They did not at first even open their close ranks, and it was not until their foremost line had been repeatedly swept away that they hesitated. Then a frightful panic seized them. Turning in rout, heedless of the commands of their officers, who were unable to check the stampede, they turned in their tracks, leaving hundreds of their dead and wounded lying in the street. In many other places throughout the town, where they had taken the side streets, the Germans crossed bayonets with the British in furious hand-to-hand encounters. At last, however, the Germans gave up their assault and fled to the outskirts; but their batteries continued to shell Landrecies for hours, while the British were engaged in sending the wounded by train to Guise and in withdrawing southward toward Wassigny.

Meanwhile another German corps was advancing in force on Maroilles, where General Haig's troops had halted, too exhausted to march farther to fill the gap in the line between Landrecies and Le Cateau. South and east of Maroilles the First Corps was soon heavily engaged with the Germans, who had been tireless in pursuit. Sir John French sent urgent messages to the commander of the two French reserve divisions on his right to come up to the assistance of the First Corps, which they eventually did. Partly owing to the aid of these divisions, but mainly

to the skillful manner in which Sir Douglas Haig extricated his corps from their dangerous position in the darkness of the night, the English forces were able at dawn of Wednesday, August 26, 1914, to recommence their march south toward Wassigny on Guise.

While the night attack on Landrecies was raging, the Germans, taxing their men to the uttermost, marched four other corps through the tract of country between the west side of the forest and the road from Valenciennes to Cambrai. These corps were in a position along Smith-Dorrien's front before dawn of Wednesday, August 26, 1914, and in the earliest hours of the morning it became apparent that the Germans were determined to throw the bulk of their strength against the British battalions which had moved up to a position south of the small town of Solesmes, extending to the south of Cambrai. Thus placed, this force could shield the Second Corps, now beginning its retreat under pressure of the German army advancing from Tournai. These troops under General Snow were destined to play an important part in the impending battle of Le Cateau.

By sunrise the guns of the four German corps were firing from positions facing the British left, and gray-green masses of infantry were pressing forward in dense firing lines. In view of this attack, General Smith-Dorrien judged it impossible to continue his retreat at daybreak. The First Corps was at that moment scarcely out of difficulty, and General Sordêt—whose troops had been fighting hard on the flank of the Fifth French Army, with General Lanrezac, against General von Bülow's hosts—was unable to help the British, owing to the exhausted state of his cavalry. The situation was full of peril; indeed, Wednesday bade fair to become the most critical day of the retreat.

Behind the close-formed infantry columns sweeping onward like tidal waves, six hundred guns, outnumbering the British artillery by at least four guns to one, were in action. The British made a splendid stand, and, meeting the advancing hosts with shrapnel, inflicted losses as terrible as their own. During the

first eight hours of the battle the British infantry not only held their ground but also made counterattacks on the enemy, General Allenby's cavalry assisting them in many a gallant charge. The Germans made frequent spirited attacks, bringing up their guns, raking the shallow British trenches, while their airmen, flying overhead, searched for the enemy guns and dropped smoke bombs to indicate the range. At one time the cavalry of the Prussian Guard actually rode into the British line, and were driven back only after a fierce struggle at close quarters with the British infantry, one bayonet against three sabers.

As the day of August 26, 1914, wore on, General von Kluck, abandoning frontal attacks, began to use his superior numbers in a great enveloping move on both flanks, and some of his batteries secured positions from which they could enfilade the British line. Smith-Dorrien, having no available reserves, was thus virtually ringed by enemy guns on one side and by hostile infantry on all sides. "It became apparent," says Sir John French's dispatch, "that if complete annihilation was to be avoided, a retirement must be attempted; and the order was given to commence it about 3.30 p. m. The movement was covered with the most devoted intrepidity and determination by the artillery, which had suffered heavily, and the fine work done by the cavalry in the farther retreat from the position assisted materially in the completion of this difficult and dangerous operation. The saving of the left wing could never have been accomplished unless a commander" (Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien) "of rare coolness had been present to personally conduct the operation."

This retirement foreshadowed the end of the battle. Worn out by repeated repulses, the Germans had suffered too heavily to continue their attacks or to engage in an energetic pursuit. According to General French's estimate, the British losses during the trying period from August 23 to August 26, 1914, inclusive, were between 5,000 and 6,000 men, and the losses suffered by the Germans in their pursuit and attacks across the open country, owing largely to their dense formations, were much greater.

The battle of Le Cateau gave the Germans pause. Further retreat of the British could now be resumed in orderly array; for by now General Sordêt with his cavalry was relieving the pressure on the British rear, and General D'Amade with his two reserve divisions from the neighborhood of Arras was attacking General Von Kluck's right, driving it back on Cambrai. Disaster to the British forces was averted, though the peril of German interposition between the allied army and Paris would soon compel still further withdrawals.

Covered by their gunners, but still under heavy fire of the German artillery, the British began again to retire southward. Their retreat was continued far into the night of August 26, 1914, and through the 27th and 28th; on the last date—after vigorous cavalry fighting—the exhausted troops halted on a line extending from the French cathedral town of Noyon through Chauny to La Fère. There they were joined by reenforcements amounting to double their loss. Guns to replace those captured or shattered by the enemy were brought up to the new line. There was a breathing space for a day, while the British made ready to take part in the next great encounter.

CHAPTER XI

FIGHTING AT BAY

THE forces of France, also, had been fighting to protect their retreat southward in these August days of 1914. After the passages of the Sambre were forced, during the great Mons-Charleroi battle, the Fifth French Army was placed in very perilous straits by the failure of the Fourth Army, under General Langle, to hold the Belgian river town of Givet. Hard pressed in the rear by General von Bülow's army, and on their right by General von Hausen commanding the Saxon Army and the Prussian Guard, the Fifth Army of France had to retire with all possible speed, for their

path of retreat was threatened by a large body of Teutons advancing on Rocroi.

On August 23, 1914, holding their indomitable pursuers in check by desperate rear-guard action, with their two cavalry divisions under General Sordêt galloping furiously along the lines of the western flank to protect the retiring infantry and guns, the Fifth Army unexpectedly turned at Guise. At that point General Pau had arrived with reenforcements from Alsace, making the Fifth Army the strongest in France. It now defeated and drove over the Oise the German Guard and Tenth Corps, and then continued its retirement. But the left wing of the French army was unsuccessful, and Amiens and the passages of the Somme had to be abandoned to the invaders.

On Sunday, August 23, 1914, the Fourth Army, operating from the Meuse, was heavily outnumbered by the Saxon army around the river town of Dinant. They fell back, after furious fighting for the possession of the bridges, which the French engineers blew up as the army withdrew southward to the frontier. Soon after, at Givet, the Germans succeeded in wedging their way across the Meuse. Some advanced on Rocroi and Bethel, and other corps marched along the left bank of the Meuse, through wooded country, against a steadily increasing resistance which culminated at Charleville, a town on the western bank of the river. There a determined stand was made.

On August 24, 1914, the town of Charleville was evacuated, the civilians were sent away to join multitudes of other homeless refugees, and then the French also retired, leaving behind them several machine guns hidden in houses, placed so that they commanded the town and the three bridges that connected it with Mézières.

The German advance guards reached the two towns next day, August 25, 1914, which, as we know, witnessed the British retirement toward Le Cateau. Unmolested, they rode across the three bridges into the quiet, empty streets. Suddenly, when all had crossed, the bridges were blown up behind them by contact

mines, and the German cavalrymen were raked by the deadly fire of the machine guns. Nevertheless, finding their foes were not numerous, they made a courageous stand, waiting for their main columns to draw nearer. Every French machine gunner was silenced by the Guards with their Maxims; but when the main invading army swept into view along the river valley, the French artillery from the hills around Charleville mowed down the heads of columns with shrapnel. Still the Teutons advanced with reckless courage. While their artillery was engaged in a duel with the French, German sappers threw pontoon bridges across the river, and finally the French had to retire. Between Charleville and Rethel there was another battle, resulting in the abandonment of Mézières by the French.

The retreating army crossed the Semois, a tributary of the Meuse, which it enters below Mézières, and advanced toward Neufchâteau; but they were repulsed by the Germans under the Duke of Württemberg. At Nancy on August 25, 1914, there was another engagement between the garrison of Toul and the army of the Crown Prince of Bavaria; after fierce onslaughts the garrison was compelled to yield and retire. Finally, on August 27, 1914, at Longwy, a fortified town near Verdun, the army of the German Crown Prince succeeded in bursting into France after a long siege, and marched toward the Argonne. Thus from the western coast almost to Verdun there was a general Franco-British retreat.

On August 28, 1914, pressed by the German armies commanded by Von Kluck on the west, by Von Hausen from Dinant and Givet, by Von Bülow from Charleroi and Namur, the Allies were pushed back upon a line stretching roughly from Amiens through Noyon-La Fère to Mézières; while their forces east of the Meuse between Mézières and Verdun were retreating before Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, and to the southeast of Verdun before the Bavarians. All northern France was thus open to the invaders.

After the battle of Le Cateau, however, the Germans slackened their pursuit for a very brief interval; partly because the

terrific strain of marching and fighting was telling upon them no less than upon the Allies, partly because the engineers had blown up the bridges over every river, canal, and stream behind the retreating armies, and partly because, under directions from the French Commander in Chief General D'Amade was organizing a new force on the British left, a new Sixth Army, mainly reserve troops, one corps of line troops, and General Sordêt's cavalry. On the right of the British were General Pau's troops; then, between Pau's Fifth Army and the Fourth Army, came a Ninth Army, under General Foch, formed of three corps from the south.

Still the British position was extremely critical. For six days from August 22 to 28, 1914, they had been driven in forced marches from the Belgian frontier fighting continuously, by day in sun and rain, by night in sultry August heat, over unfamiliar country whose inhabitants, though pathetically grateful and friendly, were yet strangers, speaking a language which most of the soldiers could not understand. Besides, the Germans had by no means given up their pursuit; indeed, five or six corps were soon in full array on the Somme, facing the Fifth Army on the Oise; at least two corps were advancing toward the British front, crossing the Somme east and west of Ham; while three or four other corps were opposing the Sixth Army on the left.

Such was the situation on August 29, 1914. On the evening of the previous day, however, a brigade of British cavalry under General Chetwode, and another brigade commanded by General Gough, fought a brilliant action with the German cavalry moving southeast from St. Quentin. They routed the leading regiments of the column with very severe casualties. This success gave the weary Britons heart; they were not dispirited. Throughout their ranks was the consciousness that General Joffre was constantly working to readjust and improve the fighting forces of France.

The hour had struck for a consultation between the French and British commanders. Should the retreat be continued, or, as France and England alike preferred, should the offensive be re-

sumed? The Germans assuredly were eager for an early and decisive victory.

At one o'clock on August 29, 1914, General Joffre visited Sir John French at his headquarters, and the two commanders held a council of war. Sir John strongly represented his position to the French general, "who was most kind, cordial, and sympathetic." Joffre stated that he had already directed the Fifth Army on the Oise to move forward and attack the Germans on the Somme, with a view to checking pursuit. He also told French of the formation of the Sixth Army on the British left flank. Now, with characteristic rapidity and coolness, he had decided to change his plan of campaign. In spite of the defeat of the German regiments at Guise, August 28, 1914, it was not part of General Joffre's plan to pursue this advantage, and a general retirement on to the line of the Marne was contemplated, to which the French forces in the more eastern theatre of war were ordered to conform. His strategy was now to draw the enemy on at all points, until a favorable situation was created from which to resume the offensive.

From day to day General Joffre had been obliged to modify the methods by which he sought to attain his object, owing to the vicissitudes of the great combat and to the rapid development of the German plans. Having driven the Allies back from the Belgian frontier, the Germans now counted upon Von Kluck being able to crush the British left, while he and Von Bülow struck hard at the Fifth Army; meanwhile the central mass — Von Hausen's, the Duke of Württemberg's, and the Crown Prince's — would break through Langle's army and then combine with Von Kluck and Von Bülow to compel the surrender of all the Allies west of the point where their lines were broken. Such was the German plan, but in the first weeks of September it underwent a very radical change.

It was imperative to abandon the La Fère-Noyon-Rheims position, because on August 28 and 29, 1914, the three central armies, after forcing the line of the Meuse around Mézières, had followed up the retreating French and driven them out of Rethel. So the

lines of the Somme and the Aisne were to be abandoned, the two generals decided, and the retreat was to be continued to the Marne. Sir John French arranged with General Joffre to effect a short retirement toward a line between Compiégne and Soissons, promising him to do his utmost to keep within a day's march.

Accordingly, late in the afternoon of August 29, 1914, the British retirement began afresh, and 10,000 French troops also withdrew from the Somme, blowing up the bridges as they went. Everywhere along the roads were crowds of country folk and villagers with wagons and carts piled high with household goods or carrying aged persons and children, all in panic flight before the dreaded invaders, fleeing for refuge in Paris. At various places these stricken multitudes joined the army ambulances taking the shortest routes. Rumors of the coming of the uhlans ran along the straggling lines with tales of the grievous havoc and ruin which these horsemen, vanguards of the German columns, had wrought in the land. Hardly had the retirement begun, when a body of uhlans entered Amiens and demanded from the mayor the surrender of the town. This was formally given, and the civilians were ordered, on pain of death, not to create the slightest disturbance and not to take part in any action, overt or covert, against the soldiery. Afterward, cavalry, infantry, and artillery took possession of the town on August 30, 1914. On the same day a German aeroplane dropped bombs on Paris.

While retiring from the thickly wooded country south of Compiégne, the British First Cavalry Brigade were surprised while dismounted and at breakfast in the early morning of September 1, 1914. Moving figures on the distant skyline first attracted the attention of those who had field glasses, but in the dim light their identity was not at first revealed. Suddenly all doubt was resolved by a rain of shells on the camp. Many men and a large number of horses were killed. At once the order "Action front!" rang out, and the remaining horses, five to a man, were hurried to cover in the rear, while on the left a battery of horse artillery went into instant action. The German attack

was pressed hard, and the battery was momentarily lost until some detachments from the British Third Corps, with the guns of the artillery brigade, galloped up to its support. Then they not only recovered their own guns, but also succeeded in capturing twelve of the enemy's.

In the eventful day of September 3, 1914, the British forces reached a position south of the Marne between Lagny and Signy-Signets. They had defended the passage of the river against the German armies as long as possible, and had destroyed bridges in the path of the pursuers. Next, at General Joffre's request, they retired some twelve miles farther southward with a view to taking a position behind the Seine. In the meantime the Germans had built pontoon bridges across the Marne, and were threatening the Allies all along the line of the British forces and the Fifth and Ninth French Armies. Consequently several outpost actions took place.

By the 1st of September, 1914, the day of the Russian victories at Lemberg, Von Kluck's army had reached Senlis, only twenty-five miles from Paris. Despite this imminent danger, the capital was remarkably quiet and calm; every day, as fateful event crowded upon event, seemed to renew the resolution and coolness of the population. It seemed advisable, however, to transfer the seat of government for the time being from Paris to Bordeaux, after assuring the defense of the city by every means that could be devised.

The defenses of Paris consisted of three great intrenched camps, on the north, east, and southwest, respectively. Of these the most important is the last, which includes all the fortified area to the south and west of the Seine. A railway over sixty miles in length connects all the works, and, under the shelter of the forts, it could not only keep them supplied with the necessary ammunition and stores, but also it could be utilized to convey troops from point to point as they might be needed. However, it was an open secret that even the outer and newer defenses were not of any great strength. If the Germans broke through the outlying circle of forts, the inner line would be of small value, and the city itself would be exposed to long-range bombardment.

Paris was not ready for a siege, and if attacked it would speedily fall.

Early in the morning of September 3, 1914, President Poincaré, accompanied by all the ministers, left Paris, and was followed at noon by the members of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies, and the reserves of the Banque de France. The higher courts were also transferred to Bordeaux. The municipal authority was constituted by the president of the City Council, and the Council of the Seine Department, who were empowered to direct civil affairs under the authority of General Galliéni as military governor, the prefect of Paris, and the prefect of police.

On his appointment to the command, Galliéni did what he could to strengthen the defenses. Trenches were dug, wire entanglements were constructed, and hundreds of buildings that had been allowed to spring up over the military zone of defense were demolished in order to leave a clear field of fire. The gates of the city were barred with heavy palisades backed by sandbags, and neighboring streets also were barricaded for fighting. Certain strategic streets were obstructed by networks of barbed wire, and in others pits were dug to the depth of a man's shoulders. The public buildings were barricaded with sandbags and guarded with machine guns.

But while Paris was preparing for siege and assault the French staff were concentrating their efforts on making a siege impossible by a decisive stroke against the German advance.

Hardly had the Government left the city when tidings arrived that instead of marching on Paris, General von Kluck had swung southeastward toward the crossing of the Marne. This news was obtained by the allied flying corps, which had made daring flights over the enemy's line.

CHAPTER XII

THE MARNE—GENERAL PLAN OF BATTLE FIELD

ON SEPTEMBER 3, 1914, the bugler of Destiny sounded the "Halt!" to the retreat of the armies of the Allies from the Belgian frontier. The marvelous fighting machine of the German armies, perhaps the most superb organization of military potency that has been conceived by the mind of man, seemed to reach its limit of range. Success had perched upon the German eagles, and for two weeks there had been a steady succession of victories. Nevertheless the British and French armies were not crushed. They were overwhelmed, they were overpowered, and, under stern military necessity, they were forced to fall back.

Day after day, under the swinging hammer-head blows of the German drive, the flower of the forces of the Allies had been compelled to break. A little less generalship on the part of the defenders, or a little more recklessness behind that smashing offensive might have turned this retirement into a rout. Even as it was, the official dispatches reveal that, while occasional and local retirements had been considered, such a sweeping retreat was far from contemplated by Generals Joffre and French. German official dispatches bear testimony to the intrepid character of the defenders sullenly falling back and contesting every inch of the way, as much as they do to the daring and the vivid bravery of the German attackers who hurled themselves steadily, day after day, upon positions hastily taken up in the retreat where the retirement could be partly repaid by the heaviest toll of death.

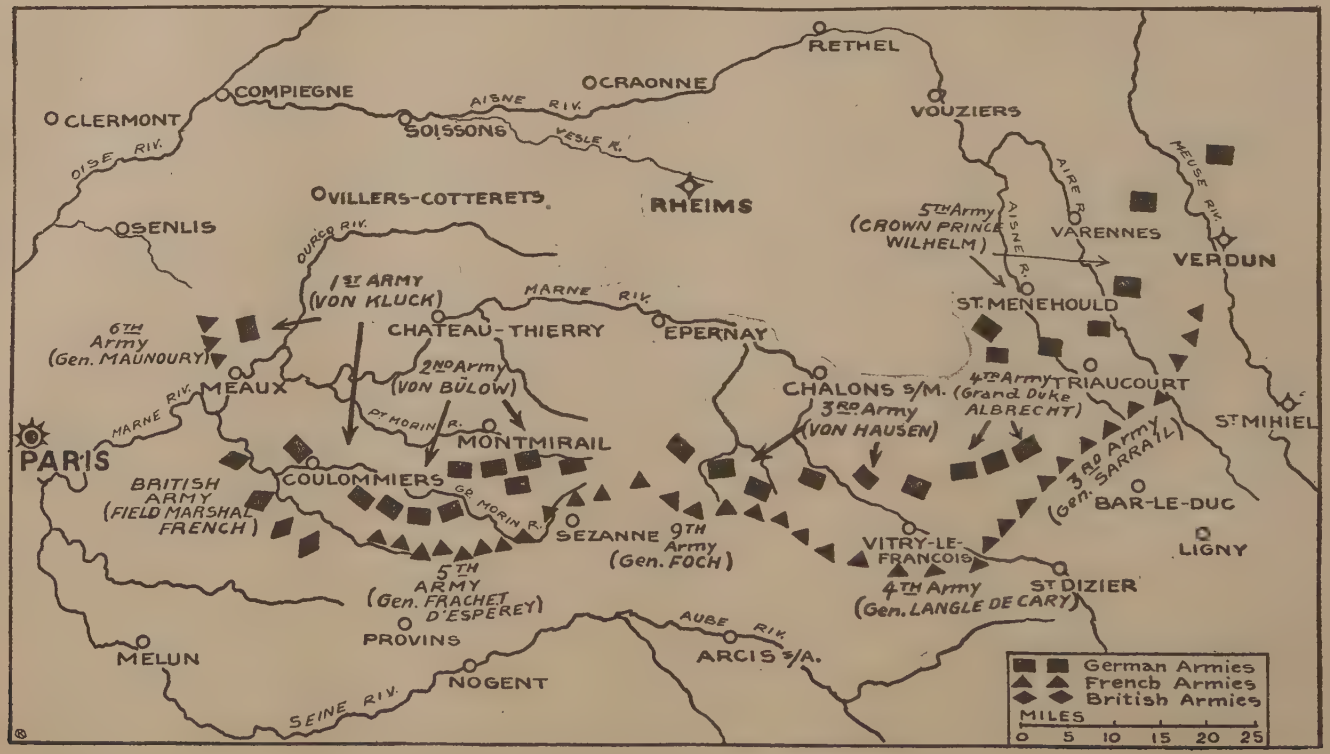
The great strategical plan of the Germans, which had displayed itself throughout the entire operations on the western theatre of war from the very first gun of the campaign, came to its apex on this September 3, 1914. If the allied armies could develop a strong enough defense to halt the German offensive at this point, and especially if they could develop a sufficiently powerful counteroffensive to strike doubt into the confident

expectations of the armies of the Central Powers, then the strategical plan had reached a check, which might or might not be a checkmate, as the fortunes of war might determine. If, on the other hand, the stand made by the Allies at this point should prove ineffective, and if the counteroffensive should reveal that the German hosts had been able to establish impregnable defenses as they marched, then the original strategic plan of the attackers must be considered as intact and the peril of France would become greatly intensified.

It is idle, in a war of such astounding magnitude, to speak about any one single incident as being a "decisive" one. Such a term can only rightly be applied to conditions where the opposing powers each have but one organized army in the field, and these armies meet in a pitched battle. None the less, the several actions which are known as the Battles of the Marne may be considered as decisive, to the extent that they decided the limit of the German offensive at that point. The German General Staff, taking the ordinary and obvious precautions in the case of a possible repulse, chose and fortified in the German rear positions to which its forces might fall back in the event of retreat. These prepared positions had a secondary contingent value for the Germans in view of the grave Russian menace that might call at any moment for a transfer of German troops from the western to the eastern front.

The Battle of the Marne stopped the advance of the main German army on that line, forcing it back.

The scene of the battle ground is one of the most famous in Europe, not even the plains of Belgium possessing a richer historical significance than that melancholy plain, the Champagne-Pouilleuse, upon whose inhospitable flats rested for centuries the curse of a prophecy, that there would the fate of France be decided, a prophecy of rare connotation of accuracy, for it refrained from stating what that fate should be. Yet the historic sense is amplified even more by remembrance than by prophecy, for in the territory confronting that huge arc on which 1,400,000 German and Austrian soldiers lay encamped, awaiting what even the German generals declared to be "the great decision," there lies,



BATTLE OF THE MARNE—BEGINNING ON SEPTEMBER 5, 1914

on the old Roman road running from Chalons a vast oval mound, known to tradition as "the Camp of Attila." In that country, a Roman general, Aetius, leading a host of soldiers of whom many were Gauls, broke a vast flood wave of the Huns as those savage Mongol hordes hurled themselves against Rome's westernmost possession. On that occasion, however, the Visigoths, under their King Theodoric, fought side by side with the Gauls. Then, the dwellers on the banks of the Rhine and on the banks of the Seine were brothers in arms, now, that same countryside shall see them locked in deadly conflict.

The morale of tradition is a curious thing, and often will nerve a sword arm when the most impassioned utterance of a beloved leader may fail. There were few among the soldiers of France who forgot that in the south of this same plain of Champagne-Pouilleuse was the home of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans, patriot and saint, and more than one French soldier prayed that the same voices which had whispered in the ear of the virgin of Domremy should guide the generalissimo who was to lead the armies of France upon the morrow. Here, tradition again found old alliances severed and new ones formed, for the Maid of Orleans led the French against the English, while in the serried ranks awaiting the awful test of the shock of battle, English and French soldiers lived and slept as brothers.

The topography of the region of the battle field is of more than common interest, for modern tactics deal with vaster stretches of country than would have been considered in any previous war. This is due, partly, to the large armies handled, partly to the terrific range of modern artillery, and also to what may be called the territorial perceptiveness which aeronautical surveys make possible to a general of to-day. While war has not changed, it is true that a commander of an army in modern campaign is compelled to review and to take into account a far larger group of factors. A modern general must be capable of grasping increased complexities, and must possess a synthetic mind to be able to reduce all these complicating factors into a single whole. The first factor of the battles of the Marne was the topographical

factor, the consideration of the land over which the action was to take place.

Let the River Marne be used as a base from which this topography can be determined. The Marne rises near Langres, which is the northwest angle of that pentagon of fortresses (Belfort, Epinal, Langres, Dijon, and Besançon), which incloses an almost impregnable recuperative ground for exhausted armies. From Langres the Marne flows almost north by west for about fifty miles through a hilly and wooded country, then, taking a more westerly course, it flows for approximately seventy-five miles almost northwest, across the Plain of Champagne, past Vitry-le-François and Châlons, thence almost due westward through the Plateau of Sézanne, by Epernay, Château Thierry, La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and Meaux to join the Seine just south of Paris. In the neighborhood of Meaux, three small tributaries flow into the Marne—the Ourcq from the north, and the Grand Morin and Petit Morin from the east. The Marshes of St. Gond, ten miles long from east to west and a couple of miles across, lie toward the eastern borders of the Plateau of Sézanne, and form the source of the Petit Morin, which has been deepened in the reclamation of the marsh country.

Once more considering the source of the Marne, near Langres, it will be noted that the River Meuse rises near by, flowing north by east to Toul, and then north-northwest past Verdun to Sedan, where it turns due north, flowing through the Ardennes country to Namur, in Belgium. To the east of the Meuse lies the difficult forest clad hill barrier, known as the Hills of the Meuse; to the east extends (as far as Triaucourt) the craggy and broken wooded country of the Argonne, a natural barrier which stretches southward in a chain of lakes and forests.

West of this impassible country of the Meuse and the Argonne lies the plain of Champagne-Pouilleuse, which is almost a steppe, bare and open, only slightly undulating, overgrown with heath, and studded here and there by small copses of planted firs, naught but a small portion of the whole being under cultivation. Between the Forest of the Argonne and this great plain, which is over a hundred miles long from north to south and forty miles in

width, lies a short stretch of miniature foothills, with upland meadows here and there, but crossed in every direction by small ravines filled with shrubs and low second-growth timber. Here lies the source of the Aisne, a river destined to live in history; and on the farther side begins the great plain.

On the west of the plain of Champagne rises, 300 feet, with a curious clifflike suddenness, the Plateau of Sézanne. The effect is as though a geological fault had driven the original plateau from north to south throughout its entire length, and then as though there had been a general subsidence of the plain, giving rise to the clifflike formations known as Les Falaises de Champagne, at the foot of which runs the road from La Fère-Champenoise to Rheims.

The disposition and arrangement of the German forces is next to be considered. It can be assumed that their objective was Paris. It is also worthy of remembrance that the German tactical method has always favored the envelopment of the enemy's flanks rather than a frontal attack aiming to pierce the enemy's center, which latter was a favorite method of Napoleon I to reach decision.

The tactical method of envelopment demands great numerical superiority, and on account of the extreme extension of front necessitated is apt to become dangerous as perforce the center is left weak. Attempts to envelop, with which the observer is confronted again and again when considering the military movements of the Central Powers on the western battle front, were revealed on the morning of September 3, 1914, in the position occupied by the German forces, and, correspondingly, in the arrangement of the allied armies.

The German right, on September 3, 1914, and September 4, 1914, at which time it was nearest to its desired goal of Paris, held the banks of the Marne from Epernay to the banks of the little tributary the Ourcq, which runs into the Marne from the north. This extreme right comprised the Second Corps and the Fourth Reserve Corps, encamped on the western bank of the little stream the Ourcq; while the Fourth Corps was given the honor of the tip of the right, being camped on the Marne at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, supported by the Third Corps, the Seventh

Corps and the Seventh Corps Reserve. The Ninth Cavalry Division occupied an advanced position west of Crécy and the Second Cavalry Division occupied an advanced position near the British army, north of Coulommiers. These troops constituted the First German Army, under the command of General von Kluck.

The Allies' left, confronting this position, held strong reserves, and by the nature of the ground itself, was well placed to prevent any enveloping movement, dear to the German school of military tactics. It rested securely on the fortress of Paris, believed by its constructors to be the most fully fortified city in the world, and should the German right endeavor to encircle the left wing of the Allies, should it develop a farther westerly movement, it would but come in contact with the outer line of those defenses and thence be deflected in such an enormous arc as to thin the line beyond the power of keeping it strong enough to resist a piercing attack at all points. Clearly, then, as long as the extreme left of the Allies remained in contact with the defenses of Paris, an enveloping movement was not possible on the easterly flank.

Facing the German extreme right, was the Sixth French Army, one of the great reserves of General Joffre, which had been steadily building up since August 29, 1914, with its right on the Marne and its left at Betz, in the Ourcq Valley, encamped on the western side of that stream, facing the Second and Fourth Corps of the Germans. The strengthening of that army from the forces at Paris was hourly, and while three or four days before it had been felt that the Sixth French Army was too weak to be placed in so vital a point—that it should have been supplemented with the Ninth Army—the results justified the French generalissimo's plans and more than justified his confidence in the British Army, or Expeditionary Force, which faced the tip of the German right wing drive and was encamped on a line from Villeneuve le Comte to Jouy le Chatel, the center of the British army being at a point five miles southeast of Coulommiers. This army was under the command of General Sir John French.

The right center of the German line was held by General von Bülow's army, consisting of the Ninth Corps, the Tenth Corps,

the Tenth Reserve Corps, and the Guard Corps. This army also was encamped upon the Marne, stretching from the eastern end of General Von Kluck's army as far as Epernay. This army thus held the Forests of Vassy but was confronted by the marshes of St. Gond.

Confronting this right center was, first of all, General Conneau's Cavalry Corps, which was in touch with the right wing of the British army under Sir John French. Then, holding the line from Esternay to Courtaçon lay the Fifth French Army under General d'Espérey. Full in face of the strongest part of the German right center stood one of the strongest of General Joffre's new reserves, the Ninth Army under General Foch, with the marshes of St. Gond in front of him, and holding a twenty-mile line from Esternay, past Sézanne to Camp de Mailly, a remarkably well-equipped army, very eager for the fray.

The hastily replenished corps, largely of Saxons, which had been General von Hausen's army, lay next to General von Bülow, a little north of Vitry, and as it proved, a weak spot in the German line. The left center of the attacking force was under the command of the Duke of Württemberg and extended across the whole southern end of the plain of Champagne to the upper streams of the Aisne south of St. Menhould. The extreme left of this advanced line was the army of the Imperial Crown Prince, holding the old line on the Argonne to the south of Verdun. In close relation to this advanced line, but not directly concerned with the battles of the Marne, were the armies of the Bavarian Crown Prince, encamped in the plateau of the Woevre, engaged largely in the task of holding open the various lines of communication, while far to the south, in the vicinity of the much battered little town of Mulhouse, lay the remains of the decimated army of the Alsace campaigns under General von Heeringen.

Facing this left center came General Langle's Fourth French Army, covering the southern side of the plain of Chalons, it lay south of Vitry-le-François, and faced due north. On this army, it was expected, the brunt of the drive would fall. At this point the French battle line made a sharp angle, the Third French

Army, commanded by General Sarrail, occupying a base from Bar-le-Duc to Verdun. It thus faced almost west, skirting the lower edge of the Forest of Argonne. At the same time it was back to back with the Second French Army, which covered the great barrier of forts from Verdun to Toul and Epinal, while the First French Army held the line from Epinal to Belfort.

CHAPTER XIII

ALLIED AND GERMAN BATTLE PLANS

So much for the actual disposition of the armies. The question of preponderance of numbers, of advantages of position, and of comparative fighting efficiency is the next factor with which to be reckoned. The force of numbers was rather with the Allies. About twelve days before this fateful day of September 3, 1914, there were approximately 100 German divisions as against seventy-five French, British, and Belgian divisions. But, during those twelve days, French and British mobilization advanced with hectic speed, while, at the same time, Germany was compelled to transfer fifteen or even twenty of her divisions to the eastern theatre of war. It follows, therefore, that there were about 4,000,000 soldiers in all the armies that confronted each other in the week of September 3-10, 1914, of whom, probably, 3,000,000 were combatants. The most accurate statistics obtainable place the German strength at 1,300,000 combatants, and the Allies at about 1,700,000. On the other hand, the preponderance of efficiency of equipment lay with the Germans, though this, again, was balanced by the advantage of the defending forces in being able to accept the challenge of battle in a place of their own choosing.

The plans of the German campaign at this time, so far as they can be determined from the official orders and from the manner in which the respective movements were carried out, were threefold. The first of these movements was the order given to Gen-

eral von Kluck to swirl his forces to the southeast of Paris, swerving away from the capital in an attempt to cut the communications between it and the Fifth French Army under General d'Espérey. This plan evidently involved a feint attack upon the Sixth French Army under General Manoury (though General Pare took charge of the larger issues of this western campaign), coupled with a swift southerly stroke and an attack upon what was supposed to be the exposed western flank of General d'Espérey's army. The cause of the failure of this attempt was the presence of the British army, as has been shown in the alignment of the armies given above, and as will be shown in detail later, in the recital of the actual progress of the fighting. Important as was this movement, however, it was the least of the three elements in General von Moltke's plan for the shattering of the great defense line of the Allies.

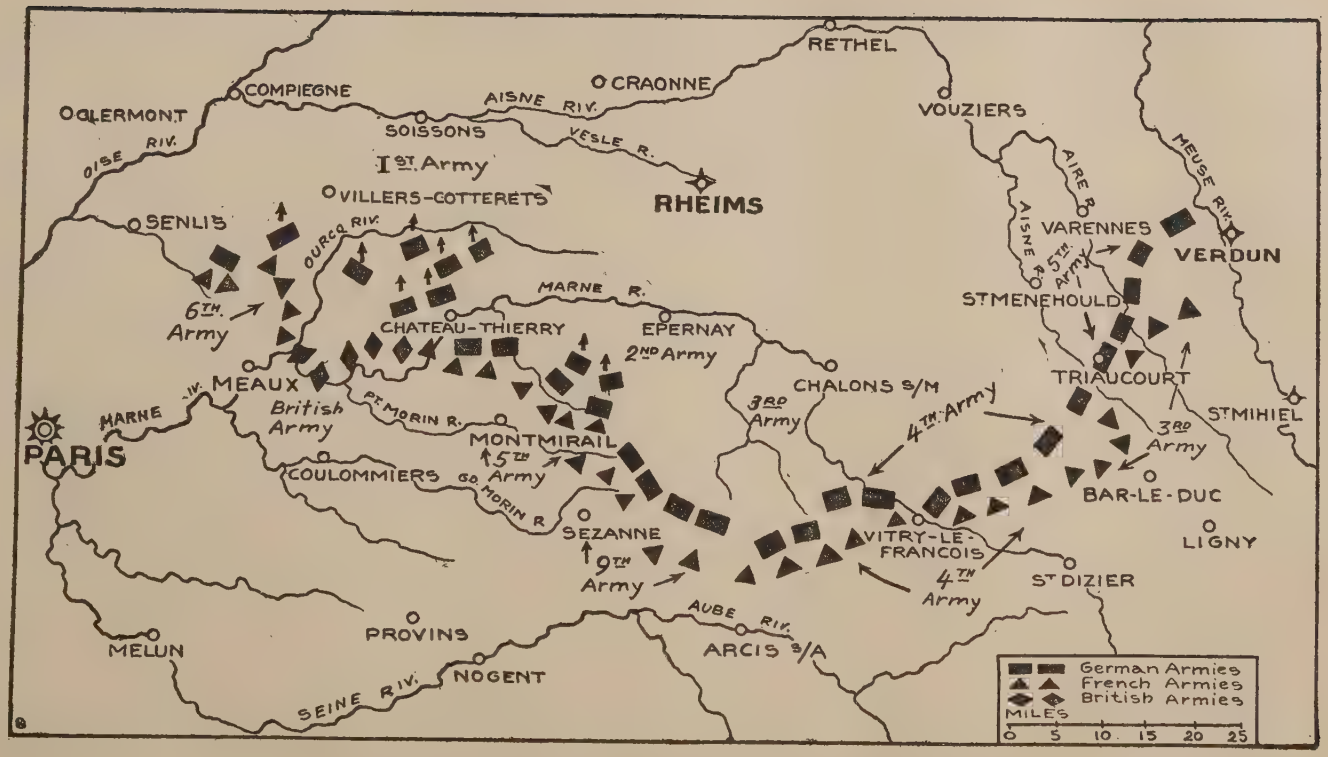
The second element in this plan was, contrary to Germany's usual tactics, the determination to attack the center of the French line and break through. Almost three-quarters of a million men were concentrated on this point. The armies of General von Bülow, General Hausen and the Duke of Württemberg were massed in the center of the line. There, however, General Foch's new Ninth Army was prepared to meet the attack. It will be remembered that, in the disposition of the troops, these respective armies were facing each other across the great desolate plain, the ancient battle ground. If the German center could break through the French center, and if at the same time General von Kluck, commanding the German right, could execute a swift movement to the southeast, the Fifth French Army would be between two fires, together with such part of the Ninth Army as lay to the westward of the point to be pierced. This strategic plan held high promise, and it would have menaced the whole interior of France southward from the plain of Champagne, but even this second part of the plan, important as it was, does not appear to have been the crucial point in the campaign.

The glory of the victory, if indeed victory it should prove, as the successes of the previous two weeks had led the Germans to believe, was to be given to the crown prince. With a great deal

of trouble and with far more delay than had been anticipated, the crown prince's army had at last managed to get within striking distance of the forefront of the great battle line. His forces occupied the territory north of Verdun to a southern point not far from Bar-le-Duc. Here the German secret service seems to have been as efficient, as it failed to be with regard to conditions only fifty miles away. General Sarrail's army, which confronted the army of the crown prince, was weak to a degree. It consisted of little more than the garrison troops of Verdun. Nor could General Joffre send any reenforcements. Every available source of reenforcements had been drawn upon to aid the Sixth Army, encamped upon the banks of the Ourcq, in order that Paris might be well guarded. No troops could be spared from the Fifth and Ninth Armies, which had to bear the brunt of the attack from the German center. General Sarrail, therefore, had to depend on the natural difficulties of the country and to avoid giving battle too readily against the superior forces by which he was confronted. It was a part of the plan of the French generalissimo, however, to feel the strength of the German center, and if it proved that they could be held, to release several divisions and send them to the aid of General Sarrail.

Subordinate to this contemplated attack by the crown prince, yet forming a part of it, and, in a measure, a fourth element in the campaign, was the double effort from the garrisons of Metz and Saarbrucken, combining with the armies of the Bavarian Crown Prince and the forces of General von Heeringen. The Second French Army, therefore, could not come to the aid of the Third, except in desperate need, for it was in the very forefront of the attack on Nancy. If the German left could pierce the French lines at Nancy and pour through the Gap of Lorraine, it would be able to take General Sarrail's army in the rear at Bar-le-Duc, and would thus completely hem it in, at the same time isolating Verdun, which, thus invested in the course of time must fall, forming an invaluable advanced fortress to the German advance.

Before proceeding to the actual working out of this plan of campaign it may be well to recapitulate it, in order that each de-



BATTLE OF THE MARNE—SITUATION ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1914

velopment may be clear. The German plan was to pierce the French line at three places, at Meaux, at Bar-le-Duc and at Nancy. General von Kluck, at Meaux, would cut off the Fifth and the Ninth Armies from communication with their base at Paris, the Bavarian Crown Prince would weaken General Sarrail's defense in the rear, and if possible come up behind him, and thus the stage would be set for the great onrush of the Imperial Crown Prince, who, with an almost fresh army, and with a most complete and elaborate system of communication and supplies, should be able to crush the weak point in France's defense, the army under General Sarrail. Such a victory was designed to shed an especial luster upon the crown prince and thus upon the Hohenzollern dynasty, a prestige much needed, for the delays in the advance of the crown prince's army had already given rise to mutterings of discontent. From a strategical point of view the plan was sound and brilliant, the disposition of the forces was excellently contrived, and the very utmost of military skill had been used in bringing matters to a focus.

The French plan, is the next to be considered. From official orders and dispatches and also from the developments of that week, it is clear that General Joffre had perceived the possibility of such a plan as the Germans had actually conceived. He had brought back his armies—and there is nothing harder to handle than a retreating army—step by step over northern France without losing them their morale. The loss of life was fearful, but it never became appalling. The French soldiers had faith in Joffre, even as their faith in France, and, while the Germans had victories to cheer them on, the soldiers of the Allies had to keep up their courage under the perpetual strain of retreat. The administration had evacuated Paris. Everywhere it seemed that the weakness of France was becoming apparent. To the three armies in the field, those commanded severally by General d'Amade, Sir John French, and General Pau, the generalissimo had sent no reenforcements. General Joffre informed the French Government that he was not able to save the capital from a siege. Yet, as after events showed, while these various conditions could not rightly be considered as ruses upon General Joffre's part to

lure on the Germans, there is no doubt that he understood and took full advantage of the readiness of the attacking hosts to esteem all these points as prophetic of future victory. The first feature of the French plan, therefore, was to lend color to the German belief that the armies of the Allies were disheartened and thereby to induce the attacking forces to join the issue quickly.

The second part of the French plan lay in General Joffre's decision not to do the expected thing. With General Sarrail placed at the extremest point of danger, it would have been a likely move to transfer the entire British Expeditionary Force from the left wing to the weak point at Bar-le-Duc. There is reason to believe that General von Kluck believed that this had been done.

The third part of the defensive prepared by General Joffre was that of a determination to turn the steady retreat into a counterdrive. Time after time had the other generals implored their leader to give them leave to take the offensive, and on every occasion a shake of the head had been the reply. Sir John French had wondered. But when the French officers found themselves in the region of the Marne, close to the marshes of St. Gond, where in 1814 Napoleon had faced the Russians, they were more content. It was familiar as well as historic ground. Even the youngest officer knew every foot of that ground thoroughly. It was, at the same time, the best point for the forward leap and one of the last points at which a halt could be made.

The fourth part of the plan was the holding fast to the point of Verdun, for thereby the communication of the armies of the Central Powers was seriously weakened. It is to be remembered that this actual fighting army of more than a million men depended for food and for ammunition supplies upon the routes from Belgium and Luxemburg by way of Mézières and Montmédy, and the circuitous line to Brussels via St. Quentin. Had Maubeuge fallen a little earlier the situation of the Central Powers would have been less difficult, and both commissariat and ammunition problems would have been easier of solution. But Maubeuge held out until September 7, 1914, and by that time

the prime results of the battles of the Marne had been achieved. To this problem Verdun was the key, for from Metz through Verdun ran the main line, less than one-half the length of line to the Belgian bases of supplies, and, owing to the nature of the country, a line that could be held with a quarter the number of men. But Verdun stood, and General Joffre held the two armies back to back, converging on the point at Verdun.

Such was the country over which the battles of the Marne were fought, such were the numbers and dispositions of the several armies on each side, and such, as far as can be judged, were the plans and counterplans of the strategic leaders in the great conflict.

CHAPTER XIV

FIRST MOVES IN THE BATTLE

THE first movement in this concerted plan was taken by the German extreme right. This was the closing in of General von Kluck's army in a southeasterly direction. It was a hazardous move, for it required General von Kluck to execute a flank march diagonally across the front of the Sixth French Army and the British Expeditionary Force. At this time, according to the dispatches from Sir John French, the British army lay south of the Marne between Lagny and Signy-Signets, defending the passage of the river and blowing up the bridges before General von Kluck.

On September 4, 1914, air reconnaissances showed that General von Kluck had stopped his southward advance upon Paris, and that his columns were moving in a southeasterly direction east of a line drawn through Nanteuil and Lizy on the Ourcq. Meanwhile, on September 4, 1914, Sir John French more effectually concealed his army in the forests, doing so with such skill that his movements were unmarked by the German air scouts. All that day General von Kluck moved his forces, leaving his heavy artillery with about 100,000 men on the steep eastern bank

of the Ourcq and taking 150,000 troops south across the Marne toward La Ferté Gaucher. He crossed the Petit Morin and the Grand Morin, all unconscious that scores of field glasses were trained upon his troops.

Probably believing that the British army had been hurried to Bar-le-Duc, to the aid of General Sarrail, General von Kluck advanced confidently. Having concealment in view, Sir John French and the commanders of the French armies on either side of him, had left a wide gap between the two armies. Through one of these apparently unguarded openings a strong body of uhlan patrols advanced, riding southward until they reached Nogent, south of Paris, and seemingly with the whole rich country of central France laid wide open to a sharp and sudden attack. Among the many strange features of this series of the battles of the Marne this must certainly be reckoned as one. Though possessing an unequaled military organization, though priding itself on its cavalry scouts, though aided by aerial scouts, and though well supplied with spies, yet Sir John French, with the age-old device of a forest, was able to cloak his movements from this perfectly organized and powerful invading army. Much of the credit of this may be assigned to the French and English aircraft, which kept German scouting aircraft at a distance. But the British general was astounded at the result of his maneuver, which, as he admitted afterward, was to him merely a military precautionary measure against the discovery of artillery sites, and a device to keep the enemy in general ignorance.

On Saturday, September 5, 1914, at the extreme north of the line of the two armies facing each other across the Ourcq, an artillery duel began. The offensive was taken by the French, and though in itself it was not more striking than any of the artillery clashes that had marked the previous month's fighting, it was significant, for it marked the beginning of the battles of the Marne. The plans of General Joffre were complete, but the actual point at which the furious contest should begin was not yet determined. In the northern Ourcq section, however, the realization by the French that they were actually on the offensive at last, that the long period of retreat was over, could not be

restrained. The troops were eager to get to work with the bayonet, and greatly aided by their field artillery, in which mobility had been sacrificed to power, they quickly cleared the hills to the westward of the Ourcq. By nightfall of September 5, 1914, the country west of the Ourcq was in French hands. But to cross that river seemed impossible. General von Kluck's heavy artillery had been left behind to hold that position, and every possible crossing was covered with its own blast of death.

Here General von Kluck's generalship was successful. It might have been regarded as risky to leave 100,000 men to guard a river confronted by 250,000 picked and reenforced French troops. But General von Kluck's faith in German guns and German gunnery was not ill-founded. This was the first of the open-air siege conflicts, and the French army had no guns which could be used against the German heavy artillery. Hence it followed that the brilliant work of the Sixth French Army on this first day of the battles of the Marne achieved no important result, for the long-range hidden howitzers, manned by expert German gunners and well supplied with ammunition, defied all attempts at crossing the little stream of the Ourcq.

This first day's fighting on the Marne revealed one of France's chiefest needs—heavy artillery. The French light quick-firing gun was a deadly weapon, but France had neglected the one department of artillery in which the Germans had been most successful—the use of powerful motor traction to move big guns without slackening the march of an army. General von Kluck's artillery was impregnable to the French. Indeed, the Germans could not be dislodged from the Ourcq until the British Expeditionary Force sent up some heavy field batteries. It was then too late for the withdrawal from the Ourcq to be of any serious consequence in determining the result along the battle front.

The afternoon of that day, when the Zouaves were driving the Germans across the Ourcq with the bayonet and were themselves effectually stopped by the German wall of artillery fire, General Joffre and Sir John French met. At last the British commander received the welcome news from the generalissimo that retreat was over and advance was about to be begun.

"I met the French commander in chief at his request," runs the official dispatch, "and he informed me of his intention to take the offensive forthwith by wheeling up the left flank of the Sixth Army, pivoting on the Marne, and directing it to move on the Ourcq; cross and attack the flank of the First German Army, which was then moving in a southeasterly direction east of that river.

"He requested me to effect a change of front to my right—my left resting on the Marne and my right on the Fifth Army—to fill the gap between that army and the Sixth. I was then to advance against the enemy on my front and join in the general offensive movement. German troops, which were observed moving southeast up the left bank of the Ourcq on the Fourth, were now reported to be halted and facing that river. Heads of the enemy's columns were seen crossing at Changis, La Ferté, Nogent, Château-Thierry, and Mezy.

"Considerable German columns of all arms were seen to be converging on Montmirail, while before sunset large bivouacs of the enemy were located in the neighborhood of Coulommiers, south of Rebais, La Ferté-Gaucher, and Dagny.

"These combined movements practically commenced on Sunday, September 6, at sunrise; and on that day it may be said that a great battle opened on a front extending from Ermenonville, which was just in front of the left flank of the Sixth French Army, through Lizy on the Marne, Maupertuis, which was about the British center, Courtaçon, which was the left of the Fifth French Army, to Esternay and Charleville, the left of the Ninth Army under General Foch, and so along the front of the Ninth, Fourth, and Third French Armies to a point north of the fortress of Verdun."

Sunrise on Sunday morning, on a summer day in sunny France, was the setting for the grim and red carnage which should show in the next five consecutive days that the German advance was checked, that the southernmost point had been reached, and that for a long time to come it would tax the resources of the invaders to hold the land that already had been won. General Joffre had so arranged his forces that the most spectacular—and the easiest

—part fell to the British, and it was accomplished with perfection of detail. But the honors of the battles of the Marne lay with General Sarrail's army and with the "Iron Division of Toul."

As before, the day's fighting began with the efforts of the Sixth French Army against the Ourcq. Before the Germans could be driven from the east bank the few villages they occupied on the west bank had to be taken, and as these were covered by heavy artillery from the further bank, the French loss of life was very severe. Yet these several combats—of which there were as many as there were villages—were stationary. In every case the Germans were compelled to cross the river; in every case the artillery made it impossible for the French to follow them.

At dawn also every one of the French armies advanced, and within two or three hours of sunrise found themselves engaged with the German front. The spirited order to the troops issued that morning by General Joffre had left no doubt in the minds of Frenchmen on the importance of the issue. It read:

"At a moment when a battle on which the welfare of the country depends is going to begin, I feel it incumbent upon me to remind you all that this is no longer the time to look behind. All our efforts must be directed toward attacking and driving back the enemy. An army which can no longer advance must at all costs keep the ground it has won, and allow itself to be killed on the spot rather than give way. In the present circumstance no faltering can be tolerated."

Yet in spite of the powerful efforts of the French armies, so thorough was the organization of the German forces, and so ably handled were they, that not a single one of the French armies could make any headway, and the point of the principal German attack—as it proved—the crown prince's pressure on General Sarrail, was already forcing that weak but heroic body of men southward along the hills of the Meuse. So far German strategy appeared perfect. The French armies were all held in check, and General Sarrail was beginning to give way.

That same dawn, however, was to bring a third factor into

play. As the mists of morning rolled away, this special army order was issued by Sir John French and read to the British troops:

"After a most trying series of operations, mostly in retirement, which have been rendered necessary by the general strategic plan of the allied armies, the British forces stand to-day formed in line with their French comrades, ready to attack the enemy. Foiled in their attempt to invest Paris, the Germans have been driven to move in an easterly and southeasterly direction with the apparent intention of falling in strength on the Fifth French Army. In this operation they are exposing their right flank and their line of communications to an attack from the combined Sixth French Army and the British forces.

"I call upon the British army in France to now show the enemy its power and to push on vigorously to the attack beside the Sixth French Army.

"I am sure I shall not call upon them in vain, but that, on the contrary, by another manifestation of the magnificent spirit which they have shown in the past fortnight, they will fall on the enemy's flank with all their strength and, in unison with the Allies, drive them back."

The air was filled with the sullen tumult of distant artillery, and in the small villages near by, south of the line, the bells were calling the women and children to church—all the men had gone to the battle line—as the British forces crept through the forest of Crécy. In spite of the report of his uhlans that the British were nowhere about, General von Kluck had placed two bodies of cavalrymen, each body containing about 9,000 men, as a precaution against a flank attack from Paris. But, with the help of air patrols, Sir John French was able to get their range. The unsuspecting cavalry were waiting for their infantry to throw back the Fifth French Army, when they might expect orders to pursue. But, while they waited these orders, suddenly the sunny western woods belched aflame. Shrapnel and case shot poured a steady stream with murderous effect, and both bodies of cavalry were thrown into confusion. Timed to the second, the British cavalry was then hurled upon the demoralized German cavalry, which fled in a rout. Their flight was quickly covered,

however, by General von Kluck's horse artillery, before whose withering fire the British cavalry gave way and wheeled to allow the infantry to creep forward in open order to the attack.

The British forces were rested, refreshed, well supplied with ammunition and in the highest spirits that the forward march had begun. The quiet advance through the shady forest of Crécy had given no fatigue and the rout of the German cavalry was another encouraging sign. When, then, the word came for the infantry to advance, it was with a cheer that it did so, expecting to carry all before it. But, while General von Kluck had blundered, or some of the tacticians on the German side had given orders that proved unwise, because of the disposition of the British army, the command of the German right was not to be caught napping. The British infantry was repulsed, with heavy losses. A German counterattack was also repulsed and it was not until five o'clock in the evening that the German shelter trenches were carried by bayonet attack.

Though the fighting in the center had been stationary on this sixth of September, 1914, it had been desperate. D'Espérey was facing the 150,000 men of Von Kluck's army, and the effect of the British attack on Von Kluck's flank had not yet been felt. He more than held his own, but at great cost. General Foch, with the Ninth Army, had a double problem, for he was wrestling with General von Bülow to hold the southern edge of the Sézanne plateau, while General von Hausen's Saxon Army was trying to turn his right flank. A violent attack, which, for the space of over two hours seemed likely to succeed, was launched by the Duke of Württemberg against General Langle and the Fourth Army. The attack was repelled, but the French losses were proportionately great. There could be no denial that many such attacks could break through the line. General Sarrail's army, fighting a losing game, showed marvelous stubbornness and gameness, but even so, it could not resist being pushed south of Fort Troyon, itself unable to support the battering it might expect to receive when the German siege guns should be brought into place.

At every point but one, the Germans had a right to deem the

day successful. The only reversal had been a minor one before the forest of Crécy. Yet, of all the generals on that front Von Kluck alone was in a position to see the gravity of the situation. The British had caught him on the flank as he tried to pierce the left wing of General d'Espérey's army, and if he should now retreat, that army could envelop him and thus catch him between two fires.

Next morning, Monday, September 7, 1914, another glorious summer morning, saw a resumption of the battle along exactly the same lines, with the same persistent attack and defense along the eastern part of the front, and with the British making full use of the blunder made by the German right. General von Kluck had realized his plight, but even so he had not secured an understanding of the size of the force that was threatening his flank, and he sent as a reenforcement a single army corps which had been intrenched near Coulommiers on the Grand Morin. The British had three full army corps and were well supplied with cavalry and artillery. Yet Coulommiers was Von Kluck's headquarters and actually, when the Germans were driven back and the British troops entered the town, Prince Eitel, the second son of the Kaiser, General von Kluck and his staff were compelled to run down to their motor cars and escape at top speed along the road to Rebais, leaving their half-eaten breakfast on the table, and their glasses of wine half emptied. One of the most dramatic cavalry actions of this period of the war took place shortly before noon, when one hundred and seventeen squadrons of cavalry were engaged. In this action the British were successful, but the German cavalry were tired and harassed, having been severely handled the day before.

In this engagement between the British and the German right, all the odds had been in favor of the British, and success meant merely the grasping at opportunities that presented themselves. Still, by constantly striking at General von Kluck's exposed flank, his frontal attack of General d'Espérey was so weakened, that, toward evening at the close of two days of continuous and very severe fighting, the Fifth French Army was able to advance and hold the position from La Ferté-Gaucher to Esternay. The

BATTLE OF THE MARNE—END OF GERMAN RETREAT AND THE INTRENCHED LINE ON THE AISNE RIVER

ground gained was valuable but not essential, yet it made a profound impression. General d'Espérey's step forward was the Germans' step back. It meant that the road to Paris was barred. How fully this was realized may be seen from an order signed by Lieutenant General Tuelff von Tschepe und Weidenbach and found in the house that had been occupied by the staff of the Eighth German Army Corps when the victorious French entered Vitry-le-François. The order was dated "September 7, 10:30 p. m." and it read as follows:

"The object of our long and arduous marches has been achieved. The principal French troops have been forced to accept battle, after having been continually forced back. The great decision is undoubtedly at hand. To-morrow, therefore, the whole strength of the German army, as well as all that of our Army Corps, are bound to be engaged all along the line from Paris to Verdun. To save the welfare and the honor of Germany I expect every officer and man, notwithstanding the hard and heroic fights of the last few days, to do his duty unswervingly and to the last breath. Everything depends on the result of to-morrow."

Much did, indeed, depend on the result of the morrow, and for the third day, again, it was General von Kluck's initial error that brought disaster to the German side. What caused it? There is not sufficient evidence to determine. It stands out, however, as the crucial blunder of the German offensive, and it occurred just at the very limit of that drive, just at that point where a single weakness assumed extraordinary proportions. General von Kluck was afterward censured for it. From the position of the foremost general intrusted with the honor of leading the very forefront of the advance on Paris, he became a commander of no special importance in an uncontested portion of the trenches. Yet on this September 8, 1914, and in the three days following, General von Kluck endeavored to retrieve his mistake with a retreat that was masterly, losing comparatively few men and leaving behind a much smaller number of guns and supplies than would have been thought possible with forces pressing him both on the flanks and rear.

CHAPTER XV

GERMAN RETREAT

THAT morning of the 8th, then, saw General von Kluck in full retreat. His frontal attack on General d'Espérey had failed and the Fifth French Army had advanced. The British were at his flank, and besides, they had been able to spare some of their heavy artillery to send to the Sixth Army under General Maunoury, to enable him to cross the Ourcq. It is by no means certain that even with this assistance could the Sixth Army have silenced the terrible fire of those howitzers, but General von Kluck dared no longer leave his artillery there, it must be taken with him on his retreat, or become valuable booty. Leaving a few batteries to guard the crossings of the river, the Ourcq division of the German right retreated in good order, to rejoin their comrades who had been so unexpectedly mauled by the British. The honor of this day was, curiously, not to the victorious, but to the defeated army. Had General von Kluck done nothing other than conduct his army in retreat as he did, he would have shown himself an able commander. Sir John French and General d'Espérey followed up their advantage. The artillery fire of the British was good and in a running fight, such as this retreat, the light field artillery of the French did terrible execution. The brunt of the British fighting was at La Tretoire. General d'Espérey fought steadily forward all day, driving the retreating army as closely as he could, but proceeding warily because of General von Kluck's powerful counterattacks. The fighting was continuous from the first break of daylight until after dusk had fallen, and it was in the twilight that the French Army at last carried Montmirail on the Petit Morin, a feat of strategic value, since it exposed the right flank of Von Bülow's army, exposed by the retreat of General von Kluck.

From this review of the forced retirement of General von Kluck, it will be seen that the German right was compelled to sustain an attack at three points, from the Sixth French Army

on the banks of the Ourcq, from the British army in the region of Coulommiers and from the Fifth French Army near Courtaçon. Each of these attacks was of a widely different character. The result of this attack has been shown in the summary of the three days (four days on the Ourcq) which resulted in the British capture of Coulommiers and in the French capture of Montmirail. This was General Joffre's counteroffensive, and it developed in detail almost exactly along the lines that he had laid down.

The scene of the fighting across the west bank of the Ourcq was that of a wide-open country, gently undulating, dotted with comfortable farmhouses, and made up of a mosaic of green meadow lands and the stubble of grain fields. The German heavy guns came into action as soon as the French offensive developed. Tremendous detonations that shook the earth, and which were followed by sluggish clouds of an oily smoke showed where the high-explosive shells had struck. Already, by the evening of the first day's fighting, there were blazing haystacks and farmhouses to be seen, and the happy and smiling plain showed scarred and rent with the mangling hand of war. On the 6th, a sugar refinery, which had been held as an outpost by a force of 1,800 Germans, was set on fire by a French battery. The infantry had been successful in getting to within close range and as the invaders sought to escape from the burning building, they were picked off one by one by the French marksmen. The French infantry, well intrenched, suffered scarcely any loss. It was in brilliant sunshine that the fire broke out, and the conflagration was so fierce that the empty building sent up little smoke. The flames scarcely showed in the bright light, and to the onlooker, it seemed as if some rapid leprous disease was eating up the building. The situation was horrible for the Germans, either to be trapped and to perish in the flames, or to face the withering French infantry fire without any opportunity to fight back. Less than 300 of the occupants of the refinery won clear.

Wherever the forces met, the slaughter was great and terrible. In the excitement and the eagerness of the first offensive, the

French seemed to have forgotten the lessons of prudence that the long retreat should have ingrained into their memory, and they sought to take every village that was occupied by the Germans with a rush. The loss of life was greatest at a point four miles east of Meaux. There, on a sharp, tree-covered ridge, the Germans had intrenched, and gun platforms had been placed under the screen of the trees. An almost incessant hail of shrapnel fell on these lines, and the French infantry charges were repulsed again and again, with but little loss on the German line. But, meantime, village after village had been attacked by the French and carried with the bayonet, and on Sunday, September 6th, 1914, that part of the battles of the Marne which dealt with the driving back of the Germans to the line of the Ourcq, was in some of its feature like a hand-to-hand conflict of ages long gone by. Yet, overhead aeroplanes circled, on every side shells were bursting, the heavy smell of blood on a hot day mingled with the explosive fumes, but the Zouaves and the Turcos fought without ceasing and with a force and spirit that went far to win for the French the cheering news that village after village had been freed of the invaders.

When the night of that Sunday fell, however, on the line of the Ourcq, the balm of darkness seemed to be almost as much a forgotten thing as the blessedness of silence. There was no darkness that night. As the Germans evacuated each village they set fire to it. The invaders actually held their machine guns at work in the burning village until the position was no longer tenable. The wind blew gustily that night, and all the hours long, the Germans collected their dead, built great pyres of wood and straw and cremated their comrades who had fallen on the field of honor.

The next day, at this point, developed fighting of the same general character. One of the most heroic defenses of General von Kluck's army was that of the Magdeburg Regiment, which held its advanced post ten minutes too long and consequently was practically annihilated. Although the French had everywhere shown themselves superior with the bayonet and at close infighting, even as the Germans had displayed an incredible

courage in advance under gunfire, and rightly held their heavy artillery to be the finest in the world, in the mêlée around the colors of the Magdeburg Regiment, there was nothing to choose for either side. The lieutenant color bearer was killed, in the midst of a ring of dead, and not until almost the whole regiment had been killed under the impact of far superior numbers, were the tattered colors taken into the French lines. It was on this day, Tuesday, September 8, 1914, that the British army realizing that it had turned the flank of General von Kluck's southern divisions sent its heavy batteries to the pressure on the banks of the Ourcq.

A graphic picture of the artillery side of the fighting on the Ourcq was given by one of the artillery officers detached from the British force.

"Meaux was still a town of blank shutters and empty streets when we got there this morning," he wrote, "but the French sappers had thrown a plank gangway across the gap in the ruined old bridge, built in A. D. 800, that had survived all the wars of France, only to perish at last in this one.

"Smack, smack, smack, smack go the French guns; and then, a few seconds later, four white mushrooms of smoke spring up over the far woods and slowly the pop, pop, pop, pop, of the distant explosions comes back to you. But now it is the German gunners' turn. Bang! go his guns, two miles away; there is a moment of eerie and uncomfortable silence—uncomfortable because there is just a chance they might have altered their range —and then, quite close by, over the wood where the battery is, come the crashes of the bursting shells. They sound like a Titan's blows on a gigantic kettle filled with tons of old iron.

"At Trilport there is a yawning gap, where one arch of the railway bridge used to be, with a solitary bent rail still lying across it. And, among the wreckage of the bridge below, lying on its side and more than half beneath the water, is the smashed and splintered ruin of a closed motor car.

"Beyond the town was a ridge on which the French batteries were posted. We could see the ammunition wagons parked on the reverse slope of the hill. More were moving up to join them.

"The village beyond, Penchard, was thronged with troops and blocked with ambulance wagons and ammunition carts.

"Through the rank grass at the side came tramping a long file of dusty, sweating, wearied men. They carried long spades and picks as well as their rifles. They had come out of the firing line and were going back to Penchard for food.

"Topping the next ridge . . . the hill slopes steeply down to the hamlet of Chamvery, just below us. The battery which I mentioned just now is in the wood on this side of it to our right. The Zouaves' firing line is lying flat on the hillside a little way beyond the village, and behind them, farther down the hill, are thick lines of supports in the cover of intrenchments. It is a spectacle entirely typical of a modern battle, for there is scarcely anything to see at all. If it were not for those shells being tossed to and fro on the right there, and an occasional splutter of rifle fire, one might easily suppose that the lines of blue-coated men lying about on the stubble were all dozing in the hot afternoon sun.

"Even when some of them move they seem to do it lazily, to saunter rather than to walk. . . . It is only in the cinematograph or on the comparatively rare occasions of close fighting at short range that men rush about dramatically. For one thing, they are too tired to hurry; and anyhow, what is the use of running when a shell may burst any minute anywhere in the square mile you happen to be on?

"I walked with the company officers who were planning a fresh advance, map in hand. They had gained the village in which we were that morning, but at tremendous loss.

" 'Out of my company of 220,' said one captain, 'there are only 100 left. It's the same story everywhere—the German machine guns. Their fire simply clears the ground like a razor. You just can't understand how anyone gets away alive. I've had men fall at my right hand and my left. You can't look anywhere, as you advance, without seeing men dropping. Of our four officers, two are wounded and one dead. I am left alone in command.' "

This hand-to-hand fighting for the possession of villages on the west bank of the Marne, this heavy loss to the French troops by

the German artillery, and this sudden check at the Ourcq itself, until British heavy batteries were sent, marks the character of what may be called the battle of the Ourcq, the westernmost of the battles of the Marne. As General von Kluck had divided his forces, in order to carry out the attempt to pierce the left of General d'Espérey's army, the German forces in the battle of the Ourcq were outnumbered almost three to one. In spite of these odds against them, the extreme German right held for four days the position it had been given to hold.

CHAPTER XVI

SECOND BATTLE

REMEMBERING again the general outline of General von Kluck's plan, that of executing a diagonal movement with 150,000 of his men to attack the easternmost point of the Fifth Army, and possibly to envelop it by a flank movement, the second of the battles of the Marne may be treated with more detail. This is called the battle of Coulommiers.

In this battle there was as great a change in morale as had been shown in the battle of the Ourcq. There, the French had been stirred to high endeavor by the realization that the word to advance had at last been given. This also operated in part on the British in the battle of Coulommiers, but, in addition, there was another very important factor.

The dawn of that Sunday summer morning, September 6, 1914, was one of great exhilaration for the British forces. The offensive was begun, the time for striking back had come, and every column resounded with marching choruses. The countryside was lovely, as had been all the countryside through which the retreating armies had passed, gay with the little French homesteads, flower decked and smiling, heavily laden orchards, and rich grain fields, some as yet uncut, some newly stacked. Women and children, with here and there an old man, ran along

the line of march ministering to the wants of their defenders. There was no need for language, as courtesy and gratitude are universal, and the English were fighting for "La Belle France." So the morning wore on.

Through the forested region of Crécy the British passed, and it has been told hereinbefore how they surprised the two cavalry commands thrust out as scouts by General von Kluck. But, as they reached the land that had been occupied by the German hosts, the bearing of the men changed, even as the country changed. The simple homes of the peasants were in ashes, every house that had showed traces of comfort had been sacked or gutted with fire. Between noon and three o'clock in the afternoon of that day three burned churches were passed. The songs stopped. A black silence fell upon the ranks. Bloody business was afoot.

It was in the middle of the afternoon, a slumbrous harvest afternoon, that a big gun boomed in the distance, and the shell shrieked dolefully through the air, its vicious whine ceasing with a tremendous sudden roar as it burst behind the advancing British lines. On the instant, Sir John French's batteries almost wiped out the German cavalry, and ten minutes had not elapsed before the full artillery on both sides had begun a terrific fire that was stunning to the senses. Under cover of their own fire, the British infantry advanced and hurled themselves against the outer line of General von Kluck's Second Army. The attack failed. The British were driven back, but though the loss of life was sharp, it was not great, as the British commander had but advanced his men to test out the invader's strength. The British artillery was well placed, and under its cover the British made a second advance, this time successful. The Germans replied with a counterattack which was repulsed, but in that forty minutes 10,000 men had fallen.

A dispatch has been quoted from a French soldier, showing the terrible havoc caused by the German machine guns, and a letter from a German officer, published in the "Intelligenzblatt" of Berne pays a like tribute to the artillery of the Allies. Speaking of this very section of the battle front, he wrote:

"We were obliged to retreat as the English were attempting a turning movement, which was discovered by our airmen. [This refers to the advance of the British First Army Corps under Sir Douglas Haig in the direction of La Ferté-sous-Jouarra, which, if it could have been successfully carried out, would have meant the entire loss of General von Kluck's southern army.] During the last two hours we were continually exposed to the fire of the enemy's artillery, for our artillery had all either been put out of action or had retreated and had ceased to fire. [This dispatch was evidently, therefore, written toward the end of the second day, on Monday, September 6, 1914, when General von Kluck realized that his forward drive had failed and that he must fall back.]

"The enemy's airmen flew above us, describing two circles, which means, 'there is infantry here.' The enemy's artillery mowed the ground with its fire. In one minute's time I counted forty shells. The shrapnel exploded nearer and nearer; at last it reached our ranks. I quickly hugged a knapsack to my stomach in order to protect myself as best I could. The shrieks of the wounded rang out on all sides. Tears came to my eyes when I heard the poor devils moaning with pain. The dust, the smoke, and the stench of the powder were suffocating.

"An order rang out, and bending as low as possible, we started up. We had to pass right in the line of fire. The men began to fall like ninepins. God be thanked that I was able to run as I did. I thought my heart would burst, and was about to throw myself on the ground, unable to continue, when your image and that of Bolli rose before my eyes, and I ran on.

"At last we reached our batteries. Three guns were smashed to pieces, and the gun carriages were burned. We halted for a few seconds to take breath. And all the time that whistling and banging of the shells continued. It is a wonder one is not driven mad."

Admiration cannot be withheld from General von Kluck for his splendid fight at the battle of Coulommiers. He was outgeneraled, for one thing, because of his plan—or his orders—to strike a southeasterly blow; he was outmaneuvered by the pres-

ence of a vastly larger British force than he had any reason to expect, and he was outnumbered almost two to one.

Through the apple and pear orchards of La Trétoire the battle was sanguinary, the British (reenforced on September 7, 1914, by some French divisions) swept through the terrain in widely extended lines, for close formation was not to be thought of with artillery and machine guns in front. It was bitter fighting, and the German right contested every inch of ground stubbornly. Once, indeed, it seemed that General von Kluck would turn the tables. He rapidly collected his retreating troops, and with unparalleled suddenness hurled them back upon the advancing First Corps under Sir Douglas Haig. Aeroplane scouts decided the issue. Had the British been compelled to await the onset, or had they been forced to depend on cavalry patrols, there would have been no opportunity to resist that revengeful onslaught. But the air was vibrant with the droning of the great air machines, and no sooner had the Germans begun to re-form, than Sir Douglas Haig moved his machine guns to the front and fell back a few hundred yards to a better position. This happened on September 8, 1914, and may be regarded as the last offensive move made by General von Kluck's army in the west. On that same day Coulommiers was invested and Prince Eitel compelled to flee, and the battle of Coulommiers was won.

CHAPTER XVII

THIRD BATTLE

THE third of the battles of the Marne, the battle of Montmirail, was not marked by special incident. General d'Espérey's part was to hold firm, and this he was well able to do. Not only by reason of the British assistance on the left, but also because the strong army of General Foch to the right was a new army, of greater strength than was known to General von Moltke and the German General Staff. The battle of Montmirail was won by the

steady resistance of the Fifth Army to the hammer blows of the German right, and to the quick advantage seized by General d'Espérey when the British weakened the flank of the force opposing him. On September 8, 1914, General d'Espérey had not only held his ground, but had driven General von Kluck back across the Grand Morin River at La Ferté-Gaucher, and also across the Petit Morin at Montmirail. Since the British had butted the Germans back from the Petit Morin at La Trétoire, these three days of fighting in the battles of Coulommiers and Montmirail had won the Allies advanced positions across two rivers, and at the same time had so weakened the German right that it was compelled to fall back on the main army and forego its important strategic advantage on the east bank of the Ourcq River.

These three battles, Ourcq, Coulommiers, and Montmirail, constitute the recoil from Paris, and at the same time they constitute the defeat of what was hereinbefore shown to be one of the four fundamentals of the great German campaign plan. With the situation thus cleared, so to speak, one may now pass to the details of the second part of the German plan, which was to engage the powerful Ninth and Fourth Armies, under the command of Generals Foch and Langle, respectively, to break through them, if possible, but at all hazards to keep them sufficiently menaced to disable General Joffre from sending reenforcements therefrom to the army of General Sarrail, on which the whole force of the army of the crown prince was to be hurled.

The next section of the allied armies, then, was General Foch's Ninth Army, which encountered the German drive at Fère Champenoise, and which resulted in the severe handling of General von Bülow's forces. With characteristic perception of the difference between a greater and a lesser encounter, General Foch called his share of the battles of the Marne, the "Affair of the Marshes of St. Gond." This did not culminate until Wednesday, September 9, 1914, so that the German retreat there was one day later than the final retreat of General von Kluck.

The clash between the armies of General von Bülow and of General Foch began, as did the battle wrath along the whole front, at dawn of that fateful Sunday, September 5, 1914. Gen-

eral Foch, a well-known writer on strategy, had devised his army for defense. He was well supplied with the famous 75-millimeter guns, holding them massed in the center of his line. His extreme right and left were mobile and thrown partly forward to feel the attack of the invading army. But, in spite of all preparations, General Foch found himself hard-set to hold his own on September 5, 6, 7, and 8, 1914. The battle continued incessantly, by night as well as by day, for the artillerists had found each other's range. There was comparatively little hand-to-hand fighting at this point, General Foch only once being successful in luring the Germans to within close firing range. The results were withering, and General von Bülow did not attempt it a second time. There seems reason to believe that General von Bülow had counted upon acting as a reserve force to General von Kluck during the latter's advance, and that, consequently, he did not think it prudent to risk heavy loss of life until he knew the situation to westward of him. There was some sharp "bomb" work at Fère Champenoise on September 8, and then came the night of the 8th.

It will be remembered that at the close of the battle of Montmirail on the evening of September 8, 1914, the western flank of Von Bülow's army had been exposed by the advance of General d'Espérey and the retreat of General von Kluck. Information of this reached Foch, and despite the danger of the maneuver, he thrust out his mobile left like a great tongue. That night the weather turned stormy, facilitating this move. At one o'clock in the morning, the statement has been made, word reached General Foch indirectly that air patrols had observed a gap in the alignment of the German armies beween General von Bülow's left and General von Hausen's right.

During the darkness and the rain, therefore, General Foch had worked two complete surprises on General von Bülow. He had enveloped the German commander's right flank, and was safely ensconced there with General d'Espérey's army behind him, since the latter had by now advanced to Montmirail. At the same time he had thrust a wedge between Von Bülow and General von Hausen, threatening General von Bülow's left flank as well. The

first was a seizure of an opportunity, executed with military promptness, the second was a bold *coup,* and its risk might well have appalled a less experienced general.

Considering the westernmost of these movements first, it will be seen at once how the enveloping action brought about the "Affair of the Marshes of St. Gond." General von Bülow's army was stretched in an arc around the marshes, which, it will be remembered, have been described as a pocket of clay, low-lying lands mainly reclaimed, but which become miry during heavy rains. It was General von Bülow's misfortune, that, on the very night that his flank was exposed, there should come a torrential downpour. These same marshes had figured more than once before in France's military history, and General Foch, as a master strategist, was determined that they should serve again. When the rain came, he thanked his lucky stars and acted on the instant.

When the morning of September 9, 1914, dawned, the left wing of General Foch's army was not only covering the exposed flank of General von Bülow's forces, but parts of it were two miles to the rear. Under the driving rain, morning broke slowly, and almost before a sodden and rain-soaked world could awake to the fact that day had come, General Foch had nipped the rear of the flank of the opposing army, and was bending the arc in upon itself. Under normal circumstances, such an action would tend but to strengthen the army thus attacked, since it brings all parts of the army into closer communication. But General Foch knew that the disadvantages of the ground would more than compensate for this, since the two horns of General von Bülow's army could not combine without crossing those marshes, now boggy enough, and growing boggier every second. The task was harder than General Foch anticipated, for the same rainy conditions that provided a pitfall for the Germans were also a manifest hindrance to the rapid execution of military maneuvers. But, in spite of all difficulties, by evening of that day, the flank broke and gave way, and two entire corps from General von Bülow's right were precipitated into the marshes. Forty guns were taken—to that time the largest capture of artillery made by the Allies—and a number of prisoners. Hundreds perished miserably, but

General Foch held back his artillery from an indiscriminate slaughter of men made helpless in the slimy mud. Thus ended the "Affair of the Marshes of St. Gond," which broke still further the German right wing.

Thanks to General Foch's further activities, General von Bülow had troubles upon his left wing. When dawn of this same day of torrential rain, September 9, 1914, broke over the hill-road that runs from Mareuil to Fère-Champenoise, at which point lay the left of General von Bülow's army, it witnessed a number of 75-millimeter guns on selected gun sites commanding the right flank of the German right center. General Foch's daring, the success of the maneuver, and the fact that the conduct of all the French armies on that day and the day following seems to be with the full cognizance of this venture, led inevitably to the conclusion that those brilliant feats, conceived by General Foch, had been communicated to General Joffre in time for the French General Staff to direct the French armies to the right and left of General Foch to cooperate with his action. Had General Foch been less ably supported, his wedge might have proved a weak salient open to attack on both sides. But General Foch's main army to the west kept General von Bülow busy, and General Langle's army to the east fought too stubbornly for the Duke of Württemberg to dare detach any forces for the relief of General von Bülow. General von Hausen's Saxon Army was weak, at best.

What were the forces that operated to make this particular point so weak are not generally known. As, however, the divisions from Alsace were much in evidence three or four days later, it is more than probable that these divisions were intended for service at this point, and also to reenforce General von Kluck's army, but that, by the quick offensive assumed by General Joffre on the Ourcq, and, owing to the roundabout nature of the German means of communication, these expected reenforcements had not arrived. The German official dispatches point out that General von Bülow's retreat was necessitated by the retreat of General von Kluck. Of this there is no doubt, but even military necessity does not quite explain why General von Bülow bolted

so precipitately. His losses were fearful, and the offensive of General Foch rendered it necessary for the Germans to fall back on the Aisne.

The armies of the Duke of Württemberg and of the crown prince may be considered together, for they were combined in an effort to pierce the French line near the angle at Bar-le-Duc. General Langle held on desperately against the repeated attacks of the Duke of Württemberg. Ground was lost and recovered, lost again and recovered, and every trifling vantage point of ground was fought for with a bitter intensity. Though active, with all the other armies, on September 5 and 6, 1914, it was not until September 7 that General Langle found himself strained to his utmost nerve. If he could hold, he could do no more, and when night fell on September 7, no person was more relieved than General Langle. Yet the next day was even worse. Instead of slackening in the evil weather, the German drive became more furious. The exhausted Fourth Army fought as though in a hideous nightmare, defended their lines in a sullen obstinacy that seemed almost stuporous, and countercharged in a blind frenzy that approached to delirium. It was doubtful if General Langle's army could hold out much longer. But, when General von Bülow was compelled to retreat, when General Foch turned his attention to General von Hausen's Saxon Army, and when General Joffre found himself in a position to rush reenforcements and reserves to the aid of General Langle, a new color was given to the affair. The defense stiffened, and as rapidly as it stiffened, so much the more did it become patent that the Duke of Württemberg could not afford to be in an exposed position far in advance of all the other attacking armies. Wednesday, September 9, 1914, revealed to the German center the need of falling back on the crown prince's army, which was the pivot on which the whole campaign swung.

Meantime, the crown prince's army had been steadily victorious. The weak French army under General Sarrail had been pushed back, yielding only foot by foot, back, back, along the rugged hill country of the Meuse. A determined stand was made to protect the little fort of Troyon, ten miles south of Verdun, for

had the Germans succeeded in taking this, Verdun would have been surrounded. No army and no generalship could have done more than the Third Army and General Sarrail did, but they could not hold their ground before Troyon. On September 7, 1914, the way to Troyon was open, and the army of the crown prince prepared to demolish it. Then came September 9, 1914, when the allied successes in the western part of the Marne valley allowed them to send reenforcements. Thus the Third Army was perceptibly strengthened and hope for Troyon grew. One day more, certainly two days more, and nothing could have saved Troyon, but with the whole German line in retreat, the army of the crown prince could not be left on the advance.

Incredible though it may seem, when the army of the crown prince besieging Troyon withdrew, that little fort was a mere heap of ruins. There were exactly forty-four men left in the fort and four serviceable guns. Even a small storming party could have carried it without the least trouble, and its natural strength could have been fortified in such wise as to make it a pivotal point from which to harry Verdun.

At the extreme east, on that ring of wooded heights known as the Grande Couronne de Nancy, and drawn up across the Gap of Nancy, the Second French Army, under General de Castelnau, successfully resisted the drive of the Crown Prince of Bavaria. Great hopes had been placed on this attack, and on September 7, 1914, the German Emperor had viewed the fight at Nancy from one of the neighboring heights. Surely a victory for the German arms might come either at the point where stood the German Emperor or where led the crown prince. But the fortunes of war decided otherwise. Far from losing at Nancy, the French took the offensive. After an artillery duel of terrific magnitude, they drove the Bavarian army from the forests of Champenous and took Amance. The line of the Meurthe was then found untenable by the Germans, and on September 12, 1914, General de Castelnau reoccupied the town of Luneville, which had been in the hands of the Germans since August 22, 1914.

With General von Kluck in retreat on September 7, 1914, General von Bülow hastening to the rear on September 8, 1914, with

the Duke of Württemberg falling back on September 9, 1914, and the Imperial Crown Prince and the Bavarian Crown Prince retreating to an inner ring of defense on September 10, 1914, the battles of the Marne may, in a measure, be said to have concluded. As, however, the new alignments were made mainly by reason of the topographical relationships of the Marne and the Aisne Rivers and the territory contiguous thereto, it is perhaps more in keeping with the movement to carry forward the German retreat across the Marne as a part of the same group of conflicts.

CHAPTER XVIII

SUMMARY OF BATTLE OF THE MARNE

STRICTLY speaking, the German retreat occupied the days of September 8, 9, 10, 11, 1914. The retreats of the 8th and 9th were those of General von Kluck and General von Bülow, and these have been dealt with in detail. On Thursday, September 10, 1914, the German opposition was over and the retreat became a drive. Yet, in spite of the unexpected defeat, in spite of the miry ground and the disadvantageous weather, the German retirement was carried out in splendid order. It might have been a rout, but it was nothing of the kind, and every effort made by the Allied armies to follow up their advantage was checked by rear-guard attacks. An excellent account of one such action shows how a division was held up for an entire day by one of these rear-guard actions. It is dated September 10, and evidently deals with the advance on the Marne River. It reads:

"The other day, Thursday, we, a battery of the —— Division, were marching along the road toward the —— River. The day before there had been a small advance-guard action, and we were expecting a peaceful march. However, as we neared the river, the battery was ordered to trot, and I guessed something was on. Soon we passed through a small village, and saw some dead and wounded lying about; also we heard the rattle of Maxims. The

major had ridden on with me and showed me where the battery was to come into action. I sent back word and selected a position, which was soon taken up. We fired a few rounds, and very shortly after I was ordered to take my section on down the hill toward the river. Well, I found that the road was blocked by a section of another battery. I stopped my section and tried to find out the situation.

"The Germans were holding the opposite bank, a very steep bluff, with a battalion of the Jaegers and eight machine guns. The guns were trained on the road where it was fully exposed for about one hundred yards and nothing could cross. The section of the other battery was trying to locate them and break them out. So I took my section up the hill behind these and waited for any targets to appear. The advance guard had been working well. By taking cover of the woods they had managed to get down into the river bed and round the flanks. From there they opened a hot fire on the German machine guns.

"From my position I could see a portion of the road on the opposite bank. I had just got the range to this when a machine gun came galloping up. I fired two rounds at it. The first was over and just behind; the second was short. However, I had never seen anything move quicker than that gun. By now our infantry had forced the Jaegers back, and we had orders for a general advance. As we crossed the bridge I heard that seven of their machine guns had been captured. We wound up and up, and on all sides saw evidences of our fire. In one place an ammunition wagon had been hit, and both horses were blown over into the ditch. A bit higher up was a young boy hit in the back. All that we could do was to give him water. He told me that his orders had been to stay there until shot or captured. These German infantry are a brave lot.

"Well, we went on into the village at the top of the hill and came into action again. Our job there was to shell retiring infantry. We soon got a target and started away. Everything was working like a well-oiled machine. Suddenly I saw spurts of dust in and about my section, and also heard the unpleasant noise of Mauser bullets round my head. Some one was firing

at my section from a wood 150 yards on the right front. I promptly switched my two guns half right and fired at 300 yards into the wood. Also our spare gunners turned up with rifles and fired. After about five rounds, out came three Germans. However, they were very much more frightened than I, and put their hands up. Soon after about eight more came out. I interrogated them, and they said that they were lost and had been wandering for two days.

"While this excitement was going on, the other two sections had also been busy, one firing at German infantry and one at a German battery. The total capture for that day for us was 300 Germans and seven guns. Not bad for advance-guard action. Still they had held up our division for a day, and done their work well and bravely."

All that day, Thursday, September 10, 1914, the forward advance continued, punctuated at every point by such actions. The British army struck across the Marne in the morning, and by evening stretched in echelon from Château-Thierry to La Ferté sous Jouarre. When dusk fell General Foch was almost at Chalons, and General Langle was encamped in Vitry after a very swift engagement with the rear guard of the Duke of Württemberg. The French success in that action had been decisive, and the rear guard fled in considerable disorder.

The next day, Friday, September 11, 1914, the French Sixth Army, under General Manoury, marched to an advanced position. It marched north by west toward Compiègne. On the same day the British drove forward across the upper reaches of the Ourcq and halted for the night in the valley of the Aisne, south of a line drawn between Soissons and Couvrelles. Chalons was entered by General Foch that day, and the famous battle field of Valmy formed the camping ground of General Langle's armies.

On Saturday, September 12, the whole of the German retreat to the line of the Aisne was consummated. The advance upon Paris was checked. The whole region of the Marne was in the hands of the Allies. The German retreat was as ably handled as the Allies' retreat had been, with this conspicuous difference, that the retreat of an attacking army signifies failure of a plan,

whereas the retreat of a defending army may well be the fulfillment of a plan. The battles of the Marne were the crucial point in Germany's invasive campaign, and the breakage of this plan hinged upon the mistake of General von Kluck and upon the strategy of Generals Joffre and Foch.

The battles of the Marne thrust themselves in the forefront of the great westward German drive almost with the insistence of attention that do some of the decisive battles of the world, as, for example, that of Tours, when Charles Martel drove back the Saracens from France. But there is danger in such emphasis, for the several battles of the Marne were by no means a decisive victory for the Allies. They were only a decisive check, and, what was more, they were a check only in so far as they drove back the invading hosts to a line of defenses of marvelous strength and defensibility. The Allies were in no position to say: "Thus far shall you come and no further!" All that the battles of the Marne entitled them to say was: "This one step farther you cannot hold!"

John Buchan, writing on the battle of the Aisne, makes a point of great pith and moment when he points out that in the battle of the Marne the Allies were able to snatch the initiative from the Central Powers, but that in the battle of the Aisne the Germans retained the initiative—"they compelled their adversaries to adopt the form of battle on which they had decided: a trench battle, well suited to their own mechanical genius. A war of intrenchments began which was to last for many weary months, and which can only be paralleled from the annals of medieval contests."

More than this, however, the German plan of campaign which had failed to achieve success in the drive for Paris had not been the only plan of campaign. Nothing is more significant of Germany's perception of the possible difficulties to be encountered in reducing Paris than the marvelously strong line of defenses the General Staff had prepared behind its drive, a line of defense intended for machinery. Germany did more than take the initiative in position at the battle of the Aisne, she did more than determine the manner in which all engagements must be fought:

she deliberately and with consummate strategy determined that the contest should be between flesh and blood on the one side and death-dealing machinery on the other. Her artillery was at that time the most efficient in the world, her mobilization of ammunition supplies was no less marvelously handled than her mobilization of men, and every foot of that country had been studied years before by Germany, so that, when the time came to fortify the Soissons plateau, there was scarcely any need for reconnoitering; each gun had its little spot assigned to it and could be placed thither without delay. A trench fortress "made while you wait" was the chief factor in the battle of the crossing of the Aisne.

CHAPTER XIX

"CROSSING THE AISNE"

IN order to gain a clear idea of what was involved in the feat of "crossing the Aisne," which more than one expert has declared to be the greatest military feat in river crossing in the history of arms, it is well to look at the topography of that point, first in its relation to the whole German line, and, second, in its relation to possible attack in September, 1914.

The prepared positions on the Aisne to which the Germans fell back after the Battle of the Marne, were along a line of exceptionally strong natural barriers. The line extends from a point north of Verdun, on the heights of the Meuse, across the wooded country of the Argonne and the plain of Champagne to Rheims, thence northwest to Brimont, crossing the Aisne near its confluence with the Suippe, and from thence proceeding to Craonne, whence it takes a westerly course along the heights of the Aisne to the Forest of the Eagle, north of Compiègne. The eastern end of this line has already been described in connection with the battles of the Marne, and it is the western section of this line which now demands consideration. Just as the River Marne was taken as a basis for the consideration of the topography of the battles

FRENCH AND BRITISH ALLIES

RALLY

TO SAVE PARIS

BRITISH INFANTRY AND LONDON SCOTTISH · DESTRUCTION AT YPRES, LILLE, AND ANTWERP · FRENCH ARMIES

A military observer stationed in one of the many ruined chateaux in northern France. The crumbling walls have been strengthened by sand bags

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A remarkable photograph of an actual bayonet charge by French soldiers typical of the gallantry and spirit they display in action

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A British naval brigade, sent to aid in the defense of Antwerp, holding a road at Lierre. They are supported by a Maxim gun

Copyright, Paul Thompson

The city of Lille, France, under fire. During the Great War this city has suffered bombardment by both Allies and Germans

Copyright, International News Service

A remarkable photograph taken during the bombardment of Antwerp, showing the falling wall of a house that has been struck by a German shell

Fighting from house to house in Ypres, afterward but a ruin. Because of its strategic position, Allies and Germans have battled repeatedly for its possession

A village in the Argonne occupied alternately by French and German troops in the autumn of 1914. The French finally reported "a slight advance in the Argonne"

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Drawn by R. Caton Woodville

The London Scottish re-forming for a third charge, in which they succeeded in taking and occupying Messines October 31, 1914

that centered round the crossing of the Ourcq, Grand Morin, Petit Morin, and the Marne, so the Aisne is naturally the most important determinant in the problems of its crossing.

The River Aisne rises in the Argonne, southwest of Verdun. Through the Champagne region its banks are of gradual slope, but shortly after it passes Rethel, on its westerly course, the configuration changes sharply, and at Craonne the bluffs overlooking the river are 450 feet high. It is easy to see what an inaccessible barrier is made by such a line of cliffs. For forty miles this line of bluffs continues, almost reaching to Compiègne, where the Aisne enters the Oise. Not only are the banks of the Aisne thus guarded by steep bluffs, but the character of those bluffs is peculiarly fitted for military purposes. For long stretches along the north side the cliffs stand sheer and have spurs that dip down sharply to the valley. The ridge, or the top of the bluff, which looks from below like the scarp of a great plateau, lies at an average of a mile or more from the stream. Many of these spurs jut out in such a way that if fortified they could enfilade up and downstream. To add to the military value of such a barrier the edge of the scarp is heavily wooded, while the lower slopes are steep and grassy, with small woods at irregular intervals. Even from the high ground on the south bank of the stream, the top of the plateau on the north cannot be seen, and from below it is effectually cloaked.

Two tributaries are to be considered in this river valley which thus forms so natural a post of defense. Both flow in from the south, the Suippe, which joins the main stream at Neufchâtel-sur-Aisne and the Vesle, on which stands the ancient city of Rheims. This river joins the Aisne a little over seven miles east of Soissons, which is itself twenty miles east of Compiègne.

The line taken by the German armies for their stand was not the river itself, but the northern ridge. At no place more than a mile and a half from the river, it was always within gunfire of any crossing. Every place of crossing was commanded by a spur. Every road on the north bank was in their hands, every road on the south bank curved upward so as to be a fair mark for their artillery. As the German drive advanced, a huge body

of sappers and miners had been left behind to fortify this Aisne line, and the system developed was much the same along its entire distance.

There were two lines of barbed-wire entanglements, one in the bed of the stream which would prevent fording or swimming, and which, being under water, could not easily be destroyed by gunfire from the southern bank. Above this was a heavy chevaux-de-frise and barbed-wire entanglement, partly sunk and concealed from view; in many places pitted and covered with brushwood. Above this, following approximately a thirty-foot contour, came a line of trenches for infantry, and fifty yards behind a second line of trenches, commanding a further elevation of fifty feet. Two-thirds of the way up the hill came the trench-living quarters, the kitchens, the bakeries, the dormitories, and so forth, and the crest of the hill bristled along its entire length with field guns, effectually screened by trees. On the further side of the ridge, in chalk pits, were the great howitzers, tossing their huge shells over the ridge and its defenses into the river itself, and even on the south bank beyond. Truly, a position of power, and one that the boldest of troops might hesitate to attack.

It is quite possible that had the entire strength of the German position been known, no attempt to cross would have been made, but there was always a possibility that the counterchecks of the German army were no more than the rear-guard actions of the three or four days immediately preceding. Yet Sir John French seems to have expected the true state of affairs, for he remarks in his dispatches:

"The battles of the Marne, which lasted from the morning of the 6th to the evening of the 10th, had hardly ended in the precipitate flight of the enemy when we were brought face to face with a position of extraordinary strength, carefully intrenched and prepared for defense by an army and staff which are thorough adepts in such work."

Yet it was evident that if the armies of the Allies were to secure any lasting benefit from the battles of the Marne, they must dislodge the invading hosts from their new vantage ground.

It was obvious that the task was one of great peril and one necessarily likely to be attended with heavy loss of life. Sir John French, knowing the tactical value of driving a fleeing army hard, determined on forcing the issue without delay.

Before proceeding to recount in detail the events of that six days' battle of the Aisne, which little by little solidified into an impasse, it might be well to trace the new positions that had been taken by the respective armies engaged in the struggle for the supremacy of western Europe. General von Kluck, still in charge of the First German Army, was in control of the western section from the Forest of the Eagle to the plateau of Craonne. He had forced his men to almost superhuman efforts, and by midnight of September 11 he had succeeded in getting most of his artillery across the Aisne, at Soissons, and had whipped his infantry into place on the heights north of the stream. That, with his exhausted troops, he succeeded remains still a tribute to his power as a commander. But the men were done. Further attack meant rout. His salvation lay in his heavy field guns and howitzers, an arm of the service in which the French army, under General Maunoury (and General Pau, who had taken a superior command during the turning of the German drive at the Marne), was notoriously weak. Still there was little comfort there, for the British army was well supplied with heavy artillery, and the Fifth French Army of General d'Espérey, also coming up to confront him, was not entirely lacking in this branch of the service.

General von Bülow's army was combined with that of General von Hausen, who fell ill and was retired from his command. Against this combined army was ranged the victorious and still fresh army of General Foch, lacking two corps, which had been detached for reserves elsewhere. One of these corps apparently went to the aid of General Sarrail, whose stand was still a weak point in the Allies' line. General Sarrail, however, was now better supported by the movement of General Langle with the Fourth French Army, who advanced toward Troyon and confronted the combined armies of the Imperial Crown Prince and the Duke of Württemberg. This released General Sarrail to his

task of intrenching and enlarging the defenses about Verdun, the importance of which had become more poignant than ever before in the events of the past week. The far eastern end of the line remained unchanged.

The credit for the crossing of the Aisne lies with the British troops. The battles of the Marne had thrust Sir John French into a prominent position, wherein he was able to achieve a much-desired result without any great loss of life. But the battle of the Aisne was different. It was a magnificent effort boldly carried out, and, as was afterward learned, it could not have been successful had the onset been delayed even one day.

General Maunoury's army, encamped in the forest of the Compiègne, was again the first to give battle, as it had been in the battles of the Marne. Using some heavy guns that had been sent on from Paris, in addition to the batteries that had been lent him by the British, he secured some well-planned artillery positions on the south bank, and spent the morning in a long-range duel with the German gunners near Soissons. The Germans had not all taken up their positions on the north side of the Aisne on the morning of September 12, 1914, and the heavy battery of the Fourth British Division did good service early in the morning, dislodging some of these before it wheeled in line beside the big French guns, in an endeavor to shell the trenches and level the barbed-wire entanglements, that an opportunity might be made to cross. But the results were not encouraging of success, for the reply from the further shore was terrific. General von Kluck's army might be worn out, but the iron throats of his guns were untiring, and he knew that huge reenforcements were on the way.

CHAPTER XX

FIRST DAY'S BATTLES

THAT first day of the battle of the Aisne, September 12, 1914, which was indeed rather preparatory than actual, was also marked by some unusually brilliant cavalry work in General Allenby's division. The German line was on the farther side of the Aisne, but all the hill country between the Marne and the Aisne had to be cleared of the powerful rear guards of the retreating German army, or perhaps it would be more correct to say the advance guards of the new German line. Early in the morning the cavalry under General Allenby swept out from the town of Braisne on the Vesle and harried in every direction the strong detachments that had been sent forward, driving them back to the Aisne. Over the high wooded ridge between the Vesle and the Aisne the Germans were driven back, and the Third Division, under General Hamilton, supported the cavalry in force, so that, by the evening, General Hamilton's division was able to camp below the hill of Brenelle, and even, before night fell, to get their guns upon that height, from which they could reply to the German batteries snugly ensconced upon the frowning ridge on the northern bank of the Aisne.

The Fifth British Division, under Sir Charles Fergusson, found itself in a tight place at the confluence of the Vesle and Aisne Rivers, for at that point lay a stretch of flat bottomland exposed to the German fire. By a ruse, which returned upon their own heads, the Germans had preserved one bridge across the Aisne, the bridge at Condé. This was done as a lure to Sir Charles Fergusson's forces, but even more so it was intended as a sallying point as soon as the German army deemed itself in a position to attack again. The bridge was destined to figure in the events of the great conflict when the grapple should come.

One of the most graphic of all the accounts of the fighting of that day was from the pen of a major in the British field artil-

lery, and it presented in sharp and vivid colors how the field artillery joined with the cavalry in clearing the German troops from the hills between the Marne and the Aisne. He wrote:

"We got the order to go off and join a battery under Colonel ——'s orders. We came en route under heavy shrapnel fire on the road. I gave the order to walk, as the horses had hardly had any food for a couple of days, and also I wanted to steady the show. I can't say I enjoyed walking along at the head with old —— behind me, especially when six shrapnel burst right in front of us. We got there just in time, rushed into action, and opened fire on a German counterattack at short range, destroying the lot so far as I could see.

"We then moved slightly to another position to take on a valley, down which they were attacking, and were at it the whole day, firing about 900 rounds into quantities of German attacks and counterattacks. They cannot stand the shrapnel, and the moment I got one on them they turned and bolted back to the wood.

"I got on to their trenches; one shell dropped in. [It would appear from this that some of the advance guards of the new defense line were either intrenching or occupying trenches made during the battles of the Marne, probably the latter, or else the writer is speaking of the actions of his battery on the 10th as well as the 12th before the invaders had retreated across the Marne.] I was enfilading them, and they tore out of the trenches, and so on, each trench in turn, and fell in hundreds. Also, through the range finder, —— saw I'd hit a machine gun, and they had abandoned it and another. So it went all day, shells and bullets humming around, but only one of my staff horses was hit. Our infantry advancing and retiring—others advancing and coming back—Germans doing likewise, a hellish din of shell fire, and me pouring in fire whenever I could see them.

"At last I got six shrapnel into a wood and cleared a heap of them out and got into them with shrapnel. It was awful! The sergeant major put his hand up to his head and said: "Oh, sir, it's terrible!" That seemed to settle them, and at last we saw the infantry advancing to their positions without resistance.

"Now was my chance. I determined to get those machine guns if I could, as otherwise the infantry would. So I left —— in command and got the trumpeter, sergeant major, and six men with six rifles, and went forward 'to reconnoiter,' as I reported to —— after I had gone. It was a weird ride, through thick black woods, holding my revolver ready, going in front with the little trumpeter behind and the others following some way in the rear. We passed some very bad sights, and knew the woods were full of Germans who were afraid to get away on account of the dreaded shell fire. We got in front of our infantry, who were going to fire at us, but I shouted just in time.

"At last we came to the edge of a wood, and in front of us, about 200 yards away, was a little cup-shaped copse, and the enemy's trenches with machine guns a little farther on. I felt sure this wood was full of Germans, as I had seen them go in earlier. I started to gallop for it, and the others followed. Suddenly about fifty Germans bolted out, firing at us. I loosed off my revolver as fast as I could, and —— loosed off his rifle from the saddle. They must have thought we were a regiment of cavalry, for, except for a few, they suddenly yelled and bolted. I stopped and dismounted my lot to fire at them, to make sure that they didn't change their minds.

"I waited for a lull, and mounted all my lot behind the bushes and made them spring as I gave the word to gallop for cover to the woods where the Welsh company was. There I got ——, who understands them (the guns), and an infantryman who volunteered to help, and —— and I ran up to the Maxims and took out the breech mechanism of both and one of the belts, and carried away one whole Maxim. We couldn't manage the other.

"We got back very slowly on account of the gun, and the men went wild with excitement that we had got one gun complete and the mechanism and belt of the other."

With such incidents the pursuit of the Germans across the Marne and to the Aisne was replete, and so thoroughly did the advance French and English troops scour that country that when the morning of September 13, 1914, dawned there was scarcely

a German soldier left on the southern side of the Aisne, west of Rheims.

The administration of the German armies meanwhile had been markedly changed. In the turning movement on the Marne the plan was clearly outlined, each commander had his instructions, and that was all. But with the need for changes of plan there was need for a directing head, and Field Marshal von Heeringen was sent in a hurry to take charge of the Aisne. This placed both General von Kluck and General von Bülow into subordinate positions. Field Marshal von Heeringen held a deserved reputation as one of the most brilliant as well as one of the most iron-willed of the German military leaders. He had been the backbone of the crown prince's movement against Troyon, a movement which, given a day or two longer, might have meant the capture of Verdun.

This was not the only factor that was framing up to give the German armies a decided advantage. The essential factor of the Aisne was the arrival of General von Zwehl and his guns. On September 13, 1914, at 6 a. m., Zwehl arrived in Laon, and in less than an hour he was in action on the Aisne front. The story of General von Zwehl and his guns is essential to an understanding of the causes that rendered the British victory of the Aisne a barren and a fruitless victory at best.

The week of September 5-12, 1914, witnessed the entire series of the battles of the Marne, which drove the Germans across the Marne and across the Aisne, as well as a German victory which exerted almost as powerful an influence in favor of the invaders as the check at the Marne did for the defenders. This victory was the fall of Maubeuge. It is going too far to say—as several military writers have done—that General von Zwehl saved Germany, and that unless he had arrived as opportunely as he did the "German retreat to the Aisne valley would have been changed into a disastrous and overwhelming rout." But it is not going too far to say that the successful holding of the Aisne line was due to the victor of Maubeuge.

General von Zwehl was one of the iron-jawed battle-scarred warriors of 1870, a man with a will as metallic as his own siege

guns, and a man who could no more be deflected from his purpose than a shell could be diverted in its flight. He had been set to reduce Maubeuge and he had done so with speed and with thoroughness. Maubeuge was not protected by open-air earthworks, but by a circle of armor-plate concrete forts. To the mighty siege guns handled by General von Zwehl, these were no trouble, for Von Zwehl had not only the heavy batteries attached to the Seventh Army Reserve, but he also had a number of Von Kluck's guns and the majority of General von Bülow's, neither of whom was expected to need siege guns in the forward drive where mobility was an essential. In addition to this, General von Zwehl also had the great siege train that had been prepared for the reduction of Paris. What chance had Maubeuge against such a potency?

On September 8, 1914, word reached General von Zwehl that the forward drive had failed, that the main armies had been beaten back and that he was to bring up his guns as rapidly as possible to cover the retreat. As rapidly as he could, to General von Zwehl, meant but one thing—to get there! He collected 9,000 reserve troops, which was almost immediately swelled by another 9,000, and with a total of 18,000 troops he started his siege trains for the town of Laon, where Field Marshal von Heeringen had taken up his headquarters. The weather turned bad, rendering the heavy guns extremely difficult to handle, but there could be no delay, no explanations, to General von Zwehl. If a gun was to be brought it was to be brought and that was all about it! Four days and three nights of almost continuous marching is killing. The German commander cared nothing for that. The guns must be kept moving. Could he get them there on time? In the last twenty-four hours of the march, his 18,000 troops covered 41 miles and they arrived in Laon at six o'clock in the morning of September 13, 1914, and were in action an hour later. The problem, therefore, before the English and French at the Aisne, was not the carrying of the river against a disheartened and retreating army, but the carrying of the river against a well-thought-out and forceful plan—a plan, moreover, backed up by the most powerful artillery that the world has ever seen.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BRITISH AT THE AISNE

IN the battles of the Marne, the brunt of the fighting had been borne mainly by the French armies, but the major part of work of the battle of the Aisne was borne by the British Expeditionary Force. Sir John French wasted no time. Saturday night, September 12, 1914, was a night of labor for engineers and gunners. The bridge trains belonging to the First and Second Army Corps were ordered to the edge of the river at daybreak, and as soon as the first gleam of dawn appeared in the sky, the heroic effort began.

At the risk of seeming a little detailed, in order to understand the somewhat involved maneuvers by which the British won the crossing of the Aisne, instead of dealing with the advance of the British army as a unit, in the manner that was done in discussing the battles of the Marne, their activities will be shown as army corps: the Third Army Corps to the westward, under General Pulteney; the Second Army Corps, under Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, and the First Army Corps to the eastward, under Sir Douglas Haig, all, of course, under the general direction of Sir John French.

The British had no means of knowing what was in front of them. There was only one way to find out—a way, alas, often costly, a way that in every campaign costs thousands of lives apparently fruitlessly, and that is a frontal attack. Down over the slopes of the southern bank, into the bright, smiling river valley, where the little white villages in the distance were hiding their dilapidated state, marched the British army. Not a sign of activity showed itself upon the farther shore. A summer haze obscured objects at a distance, but, shortly before nine o'clock, the German batteries opened fire with a roar that was appalling.

The Third Army Corps, after a brief artillery duel, advanced on Soissons to cover the work of the engineers who were building a pontoon bridge for the French troops. The German fire was

deadly, yet though more than half their men fell, the engineers put the pontoon bridge across. German howitzer fire, from behind the ridge, however, soon destroyed the bridge. The Turcos crossed the river in rowboats and had a fierce but indecisive struggle in the streets of the medieval city. Meanwhile, with the failure of the pontoon bridge at Soissons, General Pulteney struck to the northeast along the road to Venizel. The bridge at that point had been blown up, but the British sappers repaired it sufficiently to set the Eleventh Brigade across, and even, despite the lurid hail of shot and shell, four regiments gathered at Bucy-de-Long by one o'clock on that Sunday, September 13, 1914. Over the heads of these courageous regiments towered the great hill of Vregny, a veritable Gibraltar of heavy guns with numerous machine guns along the wooded edge. There was no protection, and no shelter against the terrible German Maxim fire, so that the moment came when to attempt further advance meant instant annihilation. Still, under cover of the success of the Eleventh Brigade the engineers built a pontoon bridge at Venizel and the Twelth Brigade crossed to Bucy-de-Long, with a number of the lighter artillery. As there was absolutely no shelter, to storm the height at that point was impossible, and to remain where they were was merely to court sudden death, so the Twelfth Brigade worked over the slopes to the ravine at Chipres, where they intrenched.

The task in front of the Second Army Corps was no less difficult. The bridge at Condé was too strongly defended to be taken by assault, as Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien speedily found out, so he divided his forces into two parts, one of which was directed at the village of Missy, two and one half miles west of Condé, while the other concentrated its attack on a crossing at the town of Vailly, three miles east of Condé. Both detachments made good their crossing, but the regiments that found themselves near Missy also realized that hasty, very hasty intrenchment was imperative, lest every one of them should be blown into kingdom come before half an hour had passed by. During the night some troops were rafted over, three men at a time, and these encamped near Missy. It was a false move. For sixteen days thereafter the

British troops had to remain in their dugouts, a large part of the time without food or water. To show a head above the trench was sudden death.

The regiments that crossed the river at Vailly found themselves in even a worse plight. No sooner had they crossed than the bombardment began, and the Germans knew every range in the place accurately. More than that, the line of trenches was open to enfilade fire from a hidden battery, which did not unmask until the trench was filled with soldiers. This Eighth Brigade had to retire in disorder.

The Fifth Brigade, attached to the First Army Corps under Sir Douglas Haig, an Irish and Scotch group of regiments, were the most successful of all. The bridge at Pont Arcy had been destroyed, but still one of its girders spanned the stream. It would have been tricky walking, even under ordinary circumstances, but nerve racking to attempt, when from every hill and wood and point of land, Maxims, machine guns and a steady rifle fire are concentrated on the man crossing that one girder. By the afternoon, the engineers attached to the First Army Corps had also established a pontoon bridge, and the whole brigade crossed the river in the evening and dug itself in.

Late on Sunday afternoon, however, a weak spot showed itself in the German line and Sir John French threw the First Division of the First Army Corps across the river near Bourg. Some of the infantry crossed by a small pontoon bridge and a brigade of cavalry started to follow them. When they were in mid-stream, however, a terrific storm of fire smote them. The cavalry pushed on, but could not ride up the hill in the teeth of the bombardment. The infantry were eager to go, but nothing was to be gained by the move, so the cavalry returned over the pontoon, by a most extraordinary occurrence not having lost a single member in the three hours it had been scouting on the hostile side of the Aisne. The infantry intrenched themselves solidly to await the morning.

The main forces of the First Division were especially lucky. Using the canal aqueduct they made their way toward Bourg, and drove the Germans back toward the main ridge.

More than three-quarters of the summit of the ridge had been

won, the entire Second Infantry Brigade was across, the Twenty-fifth Artillery Brigade was across, ready to support, and General Bulfin, instead of tiring his men by making them intrench there, ordered them to rest, throwing their outposts in front of the hamlet of Moulins.

This ended the first day's fighting on the battle of the Aisne. Of the Third Army Corps, a small body of men had reached Chipres. There they had been joined by a small force from the Second Army Corps. In the First Army a strong detachment dug itself in not far from Pont d'Arcy. The incomparably superior position of the Germans, their huge numbers, their possession of innumerable guns, made even this shaky tenure dangerous, though all held on. Sir John French had tested and found out the German strength and the result was not encouraging.

Although this repulse of the British army at every point was a decided victory for the German gunners, Field Marshal von Heeringen had been impressed by two things: the courage of the British attacking army, and the destructiveness of the French artillery on the south bank of the river. The German commander withdrew all his men from the advanced trenches on between the ridge and the river, keeping, however, strongly intrenched detachments of riflemen at all commanding points with powerful artillery as their support.

Sunday night was a veritable pandemonium of destruction and tumult. All night long, without cessation, the batteries of both sides, knowing exactly their opponents' range, fired perpetually. All night long searchlight bombs were thrown. All night long, golden and red and yellow streams of flame or the sudden jagged flash of an explosion lit up the black smoke of burning buildings and fields in the valley, or showed the white puff-like low clouds of the bursting shrapnel. Not for an instant did the roar diminish, not for a second was the kindly veil of night left unrent by a fissure of vengeful flame. Yet, all night long, as ceaselessly as the great guns poured out their angry fury, so did men pour out their indomitable will, and in that hell light of battle flame engineers labored to construct bridges, small bodies of troops moved forward to join their comrades in the trenches who had been

able to make a footing the day before, and all night long, those ghastly yet merciful accompaniments of a battle field—the ambulance corps—carried on their work of relief. The searchlights swept up and down the valley, like great eyes that watched to give direction to the venom of war.

At three o'clock in the morning of Monday, September 14, 1914, two regiments were sent to capture a sugar factory strongly held by the enemy. That sugar factory became a maelstrom. Three more regiments had to be brought up and finally the guards, and even thus heavily overpowered, the Germans successfully defended it until noon. They sold their lives dearly—those defenders. That sugar factory stood on that Monday as did Hogoumont at Waterloo. It delayed the advance of the entire First Corps, but at four o'clock in the afternoon, Sir Douglas Haig ordered a general advance. The last afternoon and evening scored a distinct success for the English arms, and when at last it grew absolutely too dark to see, that corps held a position stretching from Troton to La Cour de Soupir. Its chief importance, however, was that it gave the Allies a strongly intrenched position on the plateau itself.

It was of this day's fighting that, almost a month later, Sir John French was able to say in his official dispatches:

"The action of the First Corps on this day under the direction and command of Sir Douglas Haig was of so skillful, bold, and decisive a character that he gained positions which alone have enabled me to maintain my position for more than three weeks of very severe fighting on the north bank of the river."

The offensive of this entire movement was intrusted to the First Corps. The artillery strength of the armies of General von Kluck and Von Bülow was such that it was almost impossible for the Second and Third British Army Corps to assail them by a charge up the bluff. But, meantime, the French had not been idle. On September 13, 1914, General d'Espérey's Fifth Army crossed the Aisne east of Bourg, and on the following day commenced the assault on the Craonne plateau.

The next day, Tuesday, September 15, 1914, was a day of several small victories for the Germans. General von Zwehl was a

hard hitter and a quick hitter. Having disposed of his artillery where he thought it could be of the most use, he aided Field Marshal von Heeringen with counsels of counterattack, counsels that the Field Marshal fully indorsed. The Sixth French Army under General Manoury, at the extreme west of the line, was the chief point of attack. Though well placed on a strong position at Nampcel, the Germans drove the French before them like clouds before the wind, recaptured the spurs, forced the French backward through the Morsain ravine and back to their original crossing place of the Aisne between Viv and Fontenoy.

The Third Corps of the British suffered heavy loss of life without any opportunity to retaliate, for it was too thoroughly and completely dominated by the guns of Vregny.

The lull of Wednesday, September 16, 1914, was a foretaste of the deadlock which was gradually forming. The French Fifth Army had been compelled to abandon all idea of a direct attack upon the Craonne plateau, the natural position being far too strong. The Second and Third Corps of the British army could do nothing. Sir John French, though eager to push the advantage, secured by his position on the heights, was well aware that such a move was not possible unless the entire French line was ready to cooperate with him, for, if he tried to drive down upon the ridge of the Aisne, or, for that matter, tried to flank it, the line of the Duke of Württemberg would bend back upon him and nip him in a way which would render escape difficult.

A sudden recrudescence of activity on the western front gave rise to the hope that the deadlock might yet be avoided, that the two great armies might come to handgrips again. Bolstered up by reenforcements, General Manoury checked the German attack and regained all the ground that had been lost. Concentrating on the need of driving the invaders out of the quarries of Autreches, the French succeeded. This eased the western end of the line, and the Second and Third British Army Corps were left in peace.

Friday, September 18, 1914, is again a date of moment, not because anything of importance was transacted, but because nothing was transacted. It was a day of realizations. It was a

day that convinced the Allies that the German positions could not be broken down by frontal attack, just as the battles of the Marne had convinced the Germans that the road to Paris was not yet open. The six days from September 12 to 18 had revealed beyond preadventure that the German line along the ridge of the Aisne was not merely a convenient halting place for a rear-guard action, but that it was formed of lines of strong fortifications, almost impregnable and absolutely beyond the hope of storming. The forces were too evenly balanced for any concerted action to produce a desired effect, the possession of air scouts eliminated any question of a surprise. In other words, the conclusion was borne in upon the Allies with full force that, much as the German plan had failed at Marne, so had the Allies' plan failed at Aisne. The crossing of the Aisne, the winning of the heights by Sir Douglas Haig were victories—not only that, but they were full of that glory which goes with successful daring—yet they led nowhere. The plan of the Allies must be abandoned and a new one formed. This decision of a change of strategical plan, then, closed the Allies' frontal attack upon the position of the Central Powers on the ridge of the Maise, and marks the end of the first phase of the battle of the Aisne.

CHAPTER XXII

BOMBARDMENT OF RHEIMS AND SOISSONS

TO be considered almost as a part of the advance upon the Aisne were the bombardments of Soissons and of Rheims, the former being a part of the first phase of the Aisne battles, the second belonging to the second phase. Soissons, it will be remembered, lies at the western end of the high bluffs that form a bank to the River Aisne for over fifty miles. It is on the high road between Rheims and Compiègne, and on the south side of the Aisne, and consequently returned into French hands on September 13, 1914. No sooner did the French armies enter the little

town, however, than Soissons, dominated by the twin towers of its ancient cathedral, became a target for the concentrated fire of the Germans, whose artillery, it will be remembered, had been supplemented that morning by the huge guns brought on from Maubeuge by the magnificent forced marches of General von Zwehl. By noon the lower half of that once lovely city was in flames. On every hand walls collapsed as though they had been made of pasteboard. Women and children were buried beneath the ruins or blown to pieces as they fled into the streets. One of the towers of the cathedral was damaged, and there was not a corner of the town that was safe from fire. The French batteries tried to cover the city and silence the batteries opposing them on the north front of the river, but the odds were too great.

All day long, and throughout the greater part of every night, for the first three days of the battle of the Aisne, September 13, 14, and 15, 1914, the bombardment of Soissons was continual, and, in addition to being a wreck, the town became a shambles.

Closely allied to the Soissons bombardment, and occurring simultaneously with the battle of the Aisne, was the series of engagements occurring in the quarries around Autreches and Coucy-le-Château, fought by advanced bodies in front of the right wing of the German army encamped on the ridge of the Aisne. These engagements developed the illuminating fact that during times of peace German capital had been invested in these quarries and that the foresight of the Germans had led them to fortify these quarries, so that they were veritable fortresses, and indeed, formed a continuation of that line of defense the crowning point of which was the Aisne cliff near the plateau of the Craonne. During the days when the British First Army Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, was performing the astounding feat of crossing the Aisne and holding the land thus gained against a veritable tempest of counterattack, these stone quarries were taken and lost again every few hours. The French infantry of General Manoury's army, far less exhausted than the harassed regiments of General von Kluck's forces, found little difficulty in forcing the Germans back from Autreches, but, no sooner were they well established, than the roar of the combined guns of General von

Kluck and General von Zwehl would make the position untenable, and under cover of that appalling rain of death, the German infantry would creep back to reoccupy the positions from which they had been ousted by the bayonets only a few hours before. It was the German tactic of machine vs. men, a direful and cruel battle plan to the opposing forces.

Upon the day that the advance of the British definitely stopped, or, in other words, when General Joffre and Sir John French realized that further effort against the defenses of the Germans on the ridge beyond the Aisne would only mean loss of life to no gainful purpose, the bombardment of Rheims began. The old city had suffered severely during the German advance upon the Marne. Still, it had not been pillaged, and when the Germans retreated across the Aisne the old city held much of its glory unimpaired. Still the flawless beauty of Rheims Cathedral stood guard over the ancient city.

Then on September 18, 1914, the shelling of the city began and a bombardment of the most terrific character continued for ten days. Rheims Cathedral, which the French declared was outside the zone of direct fire and was used as a hospital with the Red Cross flag flying, and which the Germans asserted to have been used for a signal station and to have been surrounded by gun stations, was demolished by the fire of the German siege guns. This act created a sensation throughout the world, for Rheims Cathedral was like a gem from Paradise, regarded by most art lovers as one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. Every civilized country was shaken with grief when the news of the disaster to Rheims Cathedral was published.

It must be admitted that military necessity knows no law, and it must also be admitted that human life has a valuation to be expressed in terms far higher than any building however beautiful. In an inspired article written by Major General von Ditfurth, in the "Hamburger Nachrichten," this latter point is clearly brought out. He wrote:

"It is of no consequence if all the monuments ever created, all the pictures ever painted, and all the buildings ever erected by the great architects of the world were destroyed, if by their de-

struction we promote Germany's victory over her enemies. . . . The commonest, ugliest stone placed to mark the burial place of a German grenadier is a more glorious and perfect monument than all the cathedrals in Europe put together.

"Let neutral peoples and our enemies cease their empty chatter, which is no better than the twittering of birds. Let them cease their talk about the cathedral at Rheims and about all the churches and castles of France which have shared its fate. These things do not interest us."

Opinions will differ concerning General von Ditfurth's appraisal of the comparative values of Rheims Cathedral and the tombstone of a German grenadier, but, after all, sentiment and estheticism cannot be allowed to interfere with military necessity, nor even to menace military caution. If Rheims were far away from the line of march, and if the Germans had deliberately gone thither for the purpose of destroying it—as some prejudiced accounts seem to state—then there would not be room for two opinions. Wanton vandalism is vandalism largely in the ratio that it is wanton. But, to be perfectly impartial, it must be admitted that the second phase of the battle of the Aisne made the bombardment of Rheims a military necessity. To make this clear requires a setting forth of the new strategical plan developed by Field Marshal von Heeringen upon the collapse of the plan for the drive on Paris, which was foiled by the battles of the Marne.

CHAPTER XXIII

SECOND PHASE OF BATTLE OF THE AISNE

THE second phase of the battle of the Aisne contained two factors. One, the simplest, was the maintenance of that line of defense against any force that could be brought up against it by the Allies. It meant the ability to hold strongly fortified positions against all odds. The history of the trenches that

winter, of which more will be said later, reveals the extent to which the Germans succeeded, aided by the iron craft of the old Prussian fighter General von Zwehl.

The other factor depended on the vexed question of means of communication. There was no cross-country railway linking the eastern German wing to the western German wing. As has been previously remarked, all supplies and munitions had to come in a roundabout way. Verdun was a desired goal, but Field Marshal von Heeringen was wise enough to know that if the crown prince's effort against General Sarrail had failed, if the Third French Army had secured heavy reenforcement, and if it had been left unmolested for a week, the outer ring of defenses around Verdun would, by that time, have become so amazingly strengthened that direct or frontal attack would be impossible, while the flanking attack had failed. It was vain, therefore, at the present time, to hope that the establishment of the direct communication between Metz and Verdun might pass into the hands of the invaders.

On the other hand, there was a direct line of railway running through Rheims, Rethel, Mezières to the great war depot, Coblentz on the Rhine. A branch line from Metz, through Luxemburg, thus gave communication to the eastern wing. All the links of this were in German hands, except Rheims, and if that railroad center could be secured, the importance to the German advance would be enormous. Under such circumstances, it can scarcely be held that Rheims was not necessarily a point, the attack of which was due to military necessity.

The formation for this began on September 17, 1914. Crossing the Aisne by the old ford of Berry-au-Bac, a powerful army under the direct leadership of Field Marshal von Heeringen debouched upon the open country between Berry-au-Bac and Suippes, east of Rheims. It was at this point that the German commander in chief of this section of the battle line intended to deliver a crushing blow by which might be regained the prestige secured at Charleroi and lost again at the Marne.

Surprise may be felt that so important a railway center as Rheims should not have been a strongly fortified place. It had

been so once, though the fortifications were old-fashioned. But, instead of bringing these points of natural defense up to the highest degree of modern efficiency, the French had dismantled them entirely, so as to make Rheims with its glorious cathedral an open town, safe from bombardment. It was, according to the rules of war, safe from bombardment, but only in the event of its not being defended. General Foch did not dare to take this stand. He knew, as well as did General von Heeringen, the strategic value of Rheims as railroad center, and accepted the issue of battle.

In the falling back of the several German armies from the Marne to the Aisne, the Germans had kept possession of the chief forts of the district around Rheims. No strong effort had been made to dislodge them, for the forward movement of the Allies had been directed against the fortified heights of the Aisne, facing the Soissons-Craonne defense. It will be remembered that the armies of General Foch and Langle, especially the latter, had taken no part in the first phase of the Battle of the Aisne, but had stubbornly thrown back the armies of the Duke of Württemberg, which had combined with those of the crown prince. The right wing of this large conjoined army had held the fort sites around Rheims and especially they had made full use of the chief fort on the wooded heights of Nogent l'Abbesse, a trifle less than half a mile from the cathedral city and therefore within easy destructive shelling range. The heavy artillery was planted here, the infantry intrenched around it, and strong defense trenches were established along the River Suippe that runs into the Aisne near Berry-au-Bac.

On Friday, September 18, 1914, the first movement of the second phase was begun, when the Germans launched a sharp counterattack on the French center. This was the first German offensive movement since their retreat from the Marne, and it was powerful and well handled. General Foch fell back into defensive positions, but had much ado to hold his own. He evaded giving battle around Rheims and took up a position at Souain, which he held with the jaunty obstinacy he had displayed so often in the retreat through northern France. It was

obvious that he could not hold out long, but by clever generalship, and especially by an extraordinarily brilliant use of the cavalry arm, he held off the army for that day. That night strong reenforcements came to his aid, and on September 19, 1914, the balance of the forces was more nearly equal.

On September 19, 1914, therefore, the situation of the armies was much as follows: The Germans, acting under the general command of Field Marshal von Heeringen, controlled Rheims under the gunfire of their heavy artillery from two points, the heights of Nogent l'Abbesse to the southeast of Rheims, and the hill of Brimont a little over half a mile to the northeast. Their right flank was covered by the powerful defenses of the Aisne and the guns of the Craonne plateau, their left flank was a series of intrenchments along the river Suippe, which merged into the second line of defense of the main army under the Duke of Württemberg.

On the other side of Rheims, or to the west of the cathedral city, the Allies also held two heights, one at Pouillon, between the Aisle and the Vesle, and therefore to the northwest of the city, and the other on a sharp steep, known as the Mountain of Rheims, near Verzenay, on the south side of the river. This was therefore west and a little south of Rheims. But, and herein lies the question that has so often arisen in the discussion of the comparative strength of the two armies—especially without the British batteries—the French lacked heavy long-range artillery. They had no such howitzers as those of the German forces. Thus the Germans could shell Rheims to their hearts' content, and the Allies could not silence that gunfire from their own fortified positions. Once more, then, it became a battle between infantry and artillery, between men and machines.

This time, however, the advance was not favorable to the Germans. Their heavy artillery commanded Rheims, but it did not command the French line to the west of Rheims. The invaders performed prodigies of valor. Again and again they hurled themselves against the French line. But General Foch's troops were well supplied with that terrible engine of destruc-

tion—the French 3-inch field piece, known as the 75-mm., an extremely powerful gun for its caliber.

In four successive night attacks on September 19-20, 1914, the heaviest onset was made. Supported by a terrific gunfire, directed with the long pointing fingers of searchlights, the German infantry, invigorated by a week's rest, rolled up in gray-clad tidal waves against the French line. General Foch had known how to post his defense, and within twenty-four hours he had made the line between Pouillon and the Mountain of Rheims almost as strong as the German line between Brimont and Nogent l'Abbesse. Poor Rheims lay between, wide open to the eruption of destruction that belched from the throats of the German howitzers.

CHAPTER XXIV

RHEIMS AGAIN BOMBARDED

ON September 20, 1914, the direct bombardment of Rheims began. The main advance of the Germans had again failed, and again it had been the strategy and military leadership of General Foch that had won the day. The bombardment of Rheims began, and with it, the bombardment of the cathedral. Enough has been said to show that the bombardment of Rheims can readily be explained as a part of the general movement of the second phase of the battle of the Aisne, but it is only fair to quote the statements made by the Allies with regard to the pointedness and deliberation of the German gunfire upon the cathedral.

"The German military authorities," wrote H. W. Wilson, one of the British military writers, "alleged that there was a French battery near the cathedral and that it was so placed as to bring the sacred building in the line of fire from the opposing German battery. As a matter of fact, there were some French guns a mile to the north of the cathedral and some other French guns two miles to the south of it. It was the latter battery which

the Germans said they were aiming at when they smote the cathedral. As was said by the American author, Mr. Richard Harding Davis, who was in Rheims when the bombardment began, 'to accept the German claim we must believe that continuously for four days they aimed at a battery, and, two miles from it, continuously hit the cathedral of Rheims.'

"Even in the hour of their defeat (it has been mentioned that this is a British source) the Prussians were not so blind with rage as that. They were firing 6-inch shells at a distance of some 7,000 yards from Nogent l'Abbesse hill. Adjoining the cathedral is a well-known hotel with a German proprietor. The gunners—whose marksmanship was, indeed, exceedingly good—pitched their shell so exactly that for four days—from Saturday, September 19, 1914, to Tuesday, September 22, 1914—each shell fell on the cathedral and the archbishop's palace and robing room of the Kings of France, without a splinter injuring the German hotel hard by." This is probably an overstatement, but presents the opinion generally expressed by the Allies at the time.

It was on Sunday morning, at the time usually held consecrate to religious services, that one of the German shells struck the scaffolding erected round the left tower for restoration work. The fact that the great cathedral was now being used as a hospital for the German wounded soldiers and was flying two Red Cross flags did not save it. The scaffolding flamed and the fire spread to the old arched roof of oak above the lower roof of stone. The molten lead from the gutters dropped upon the straw in the nave on which the wounded Germans were lying, and the interior also became a mass of flames threatening to burn the wounded men alive.

Swift to the rescue sprang the gray-haired Archbishop Landreux, who, at the time, was reciting his Holy Office. Remembering who it was that had said "Greater love hath no man than this—that he lay down life for his friend," the aged prelate, with a young athletic, manly priest, Abbé Chinot, who was in charge of the cathedral, rushed into the flaming fane. Within the straw was ablaze, overhead the timbers were crackling, little

glistening drops of molten metal menaced them every few yards and shells were dropping steadily, but the two clerics began the work of rescue, the archbishop, whose strength was not great, helping those that were able to stagger a little, while Abbé Chinot bodily picked up the wounded men and dashed with them to the north portal, out of shell fire. Doctors and nurses rushed to aid.

Then one of the strange fits of mob fury, which spring up no one knows whither, seized some of the people of Rheims. Made frantic by their losses, for hundreds of peaceful inoffensive citizens had been killed in the streets by the gunfire of the day before, filled with vengeful hate at the sight of their beloved cathedral in flames, a sudden crowd appeared at the great door of the cathedral and clamored that the wounded men would be allowed to die in the hell of their comrades' making. More than one rifle was raised and pointed at the wounded men who had already been carried out.

The gray-haired archbishop, a Prince of Men as well as a Prince of the Church, stepped quietly forward.

"Very well, my children," he said as he placed himself between the mob and its intended victims, "but you will fire upon me first."

The hoarse shriek of the shells continued, the drumming of the gunfire throbbed in the air, but in the crowd there was silence. Then, with a perception of greatness that is common to the hearts of all men, no matter on what side of any cause they may be fighting, the foremost ranks of the crowd leaped forward as one man, vieing with each other to be the first to volunteer in the rescue of their enemies.

And, through the whole scene, the statue of Joan of Arc looked on at the brave act of a prelate she would have delighted to honor, and at the recognition of that courage by the people she herself gave her life to save.

CHAPTER XXV

END OF THE BATTLE

AFTER September 22, 1914, there was a lull in the fighting at Rheims, and as afterwards appeared, this was due mainly to another change of plan on the part of the German Staff. But it was no part of General Foch's intentions to leave the bombardment of the cathedral unrevenged. He had, indeed, caused an unparalleled slaughter on the night of September 19, as has been stated, but his troops were avid for reprisal and the French strategist knew well how dangerous it is to allow an army, eager for action and revenge, to eat its heart out vainly. He was too wise to run the risk of a countercharge, but four days later, his opportunity came, and he took advantage of it to the full.

At dawn on September 26, 1914, a detachment of 15,000 Germans, including all that remained of the famous Prussian Guards Corps, that same body that had fought so marvelously on many occasions, and which had suffered the most cruelly in the affair of the marshes of St. Gond, made a sortie from the base line at Nogent l'Abbesse to destroy the railway line between Rheims and Verdun, this line was, indeed, the principal link of communication to that all-important fortress that protruded its bristling salient into the heart of the German position. A French aviator, who had climbed into his machine when it was yet dark, in order to do a little daybreak scouting before the light should be sufficiently bright to make him an easy target, saw this movement and reported it immediately to General Foch. That commander, who knew how to use cavalry, ordered a regiment at the gallop to occupy the village of Auberive, on the Suippe, and there harry the advancing column sufficiently to give him time to bring up the light artillery and to bring into action a large body of infantry encamped at Jouchery, five miles away.

Before six o'clock, the cavalry were in Auberive. The men worked like fiends. The streets were rapidly barricaded, ma-

chine guns hoisted to roofs and other points where they might command a wide sweep of fire. Then the cavalry rode forward to meet the advancing column. Not knowing what might be in front of him, the German commander halted, awaiting reports from his air scouts. The halt was but three-quarters of an hour, but that was of vast importance. The scouts reported only a regiment of cavalry ahead, but a powerful detachment of French artillery on the road from Jouchery. The German leader detached 2,000 of the Death's Head Hussars, his crack cavalry, to cut off, or at all events to delay, the French guns. He was aware that the artillery would have no anticipation of this and, in the surprise, the guns might be captured. Meantime, he hurried his advance to Auberive, captured the village, though after another hour's delay, caused by the resistance of the cavalry, who retreated to St. Hilaire.

Meantime, at St. Hilaire, the surprise charge of the Death's Head Hussars was launched. It was scarcely a question of minutes, it was rather a matter of seconds. But the French artillery knew their light field pieces as thoroughly as the Germans were masters of the heavy guns. In less than two minutes the artillery teams were unharnessed, the guns were in position and the gunners took their places when the Hussars were so near, the voices of their leaders could be heard. Thirty seconds earlier, and the Hussars would have been in among the guns and made a notable capture. There was just time enough for a man to breathe twice, when the order came to fire. The Hussars were at less than a hundred yards range. As the shrapnel burst, the front squadrons seemed to stumble and fall. The ranks were so near that the change from living human beings into mangled pieces of flesh and rags could clearly be seen. More than one veteran gunner felt squeamish at the sight. But the rear squadrons, though their horses' hoofs were squelching in the blood of their comrades of a moment before, never blenched or faltered but swept on at a thundering gallop. Again the guns spoke, and again. That was all. Amid the vines, here and there a writhing figure could be seen, or a wounded horse endeavoring to rise, and here and there a straggler striving to escape. It

was level open country, twice again the guns roared, five rounds in all, and all movement ceased. The engagement had lasted less than five minutes and of those two thousand splendid horsemen not one escaped. The French artillerists picked up the wounded and sent them back to Rheims to receive nursing and care, and then hurried on to the action whither they were bound when surprised by the Hussars.

The infantry of the Germans and of the French were now coming to hand grips. A battalion of Zouaves was creeping round to attack the advancing column in the rear. The German commander at Nogent l'Abbesse learned from his air scouts what was happening. He saw the peril of the advancing column, that it was almost surrounded and he threw further columns into the fray, to cover the retreat. The sortie on the railway had now become impossible. General Foch had moved too quickly. But, even so, the peril was great, for the German force was almost cut off. It meant the loss of 15,000 men and artillery, or it meant the sacrifice of some one corps to cover the retreat. The latter course was chosen.

Three thousand of the Guards Corps, the flower of the Prussian Army, were sent like a catapult at the gap in the French line, immediately in front of Rheims. Five times they charged, and that with such heroic daring and such penetrative energy that General Foch did not dare break from his position. As they came up for the fifth assault, a wild cheer of admiration broke out along the French line. But the rifles spoke steadily, none the less for that. After the fifth assault, barely a hundred men were left, nearly all wounded. They reversed rifles, a sign of surrender, and in all honor they were received by General Foch, who conducted them to the hospital in his rear. They lived up to the full the most heroic traditions of the old Prussian corps and they saved that whole German force from destruction. Still, with the annihilation of the Death's Head Hussars and the remainder of the Prussian Guards Corps on the same day, the forces under General Foch felt that in part Rheims had been avenged.

The other section of this second phase of the Aisne consisted

of the trench warfare, which solidified from September 19 to October 6 under conditions of extreme difficulty and more than extreme discomfort. It was practically the establishment of a trench campaign that lasted all winter, and revived the centuries old fortress warfare, applying it under modern conditions to field fortifications. The French during that winter on the Aisne never quite succeeded in rivaling the mechanical precision of the German movements; the Germans, on the other hand, never showed themselves to possess the emotional fervor of the French with the bayonet.

In many places German and Allies' trenches almost touched each other. The first two weeks at the Aisne were one continual downpour, and the foundation of that ground is chalk. On the sides of the plateau of Craonne, after two weeks rain, the chalky mud seemed bottomless. "It filled the ears and eyes and throats of our men," wrote John Buchan, "it plastered their clothing and mingled generously with their diet. Their grandfathers, who had been at Sebastopol, could have told them something about mud; but even after India and South Africa, the mire of the Aisne seemed a grievous affliction." The fighting was constant, the nervous strain exhausting and the cold and wet were even harder to bear. There had as yet been no time to build trenches with all conveniences, such as the Germans possessed on the crest of the ridge, and the trenches of the Allies were a chilled inferno of woe.

A stretch of waste ground lay between the trenches, and often for days at a time the fire was too heavy to rescue the wounded or bring in the dead. The men in the trenches, on either side, were compelled to hear the groans of the wounded, lying in the open day after day, until exhaustion, cold and pain brought them a merciful release. In letters more than one soldier declared that the hardest thing to bear was to hear a fellow comrade shrieking or groaning in agony a few steps away for hours—even days at a time—and to be able to do nothing to help. The stench from the unburied bodies was so great that officially all the tobacco for the whole battle front was commandeered and sent to the trenches under the plateau of Craonne and on the

hill to the westward, where the British First Army Corps was placed. Such, for the two weeks between September 22, 1914, and October 6, 1914, was the trench warfare during the second phase of the battle of the Aisne, a condition never after repeated in the war, for such a feat as the crossing of the Aisne could scarcely be duplicated. It was gallant, it was magnificent and it was costly—the British casualty list for September 12 to October 6 being, killed, wounded and missing, 561 officers and 12,980 men—but it was useless, and only served to give the Allies a temporary base whereby General Foch was successful in checking the German attempt to capture the Rheims-Verdun railway. It was a victory of bravery, but not a victory of result.

During all these operations the Belgian army, now at Antwerp, had harassed the German troops by frequent sorties. The capture of the city was at once undertaken by the German Staff, following the stalemate created by the operations at the Aisne.

CHAPTER XXVI

SIEGE AND FALL OF ANTWERP

THE siege of Antwerp began on September 29, 1914, and in less than two weeks, October 10, 1914, this historic city, one of the most important trade centers of the world and one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was forced to capitulate, though it had always been believed to be impregnable.

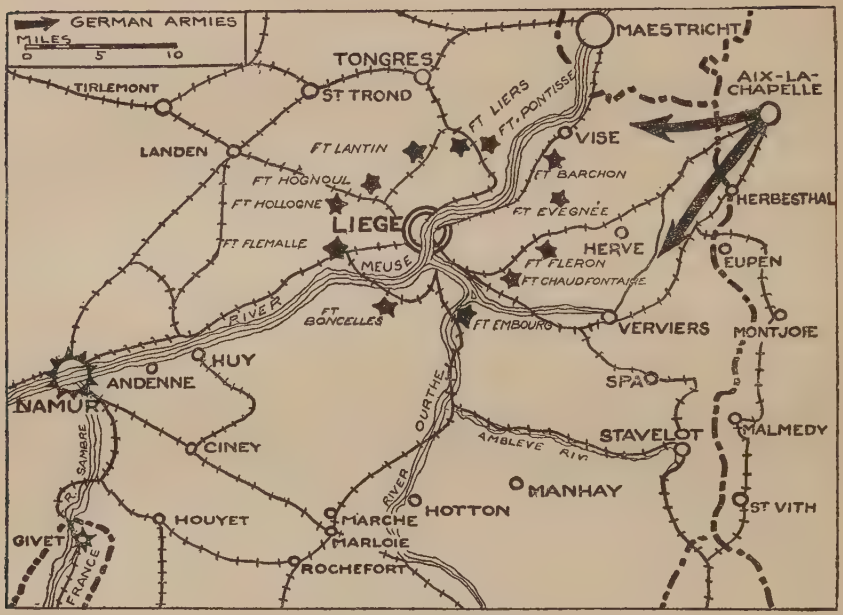
During the latter part of September, 1914, the forces of the belligerents were driving northward in that memorable race for the Channel in which both sides had the same object: each was trying to be the first to turn the other's front and crumble his line. At the same time the German forces, then in the vicinity of Brussels, under the command of General von Beseler, pushed toward Antwerp, on which the Belgian army had fallen back to make its last stand. This move was necessary in order to cut off all danger of rear attacks which would menace General

von Kluck's drive to the coast, a movement which had reached Douai on October 1, 1914.

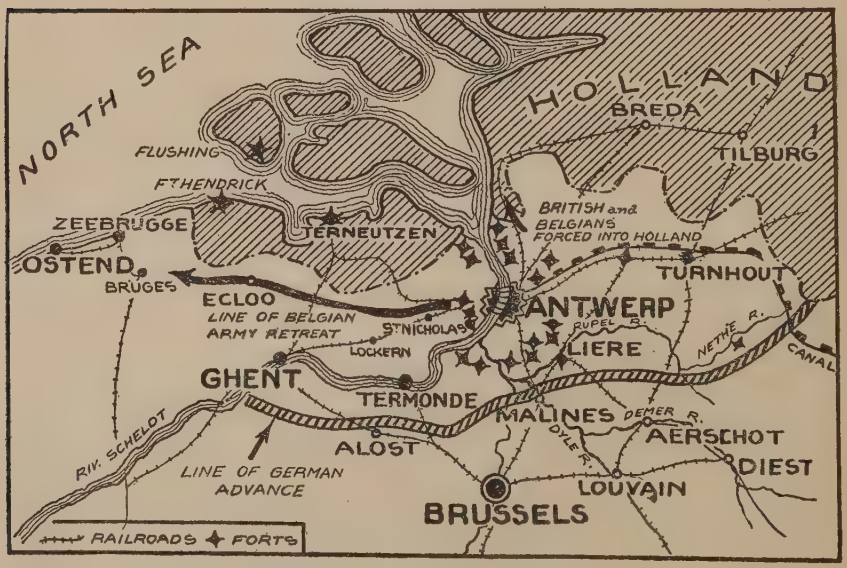
The German General Staff had decided to take Antwerp at all cost. General von Beseler on the last day of September, 1914, reached a point within range of Antwerp's farthest outer forts.

In order to understand the record of the following successive steps in the siege of Antwerp, a description of this city's position and the location of its double circle of forts is necessary. Antwerp was considered one of the most formidable strongholds in the world. The elaborate defenses of Antwerp evolved from the original fortifications of thirty years ago through continual additions. The location of the city offers very many natural advantages for its defense, and the engineering genius controlling the work made full use of these opportunities. From the north Antwerp has access to the sea by the river Scheldt, of which the arm nearest to the city is narrow, with six strong forts on each bank, including the citadel.

Any armies approaching from the south must cross the rivers Rupel and Nethe, which practically, in the shape of a semicircle, swing around the city to the south at a distance varying from about six to twelve miles. Within this circle of flowing water, and about two miles from the city, is another circle, formed by twelve powerful forts. At a point almost due east from the center of the city and commanding the railroad to Holland, by way of Turnhout, is located the first of eight forts, designated by numbers. From there they swing to the south and west, with fort eight very close to the Scheldt and directly south to the village of Hoboken. On the other side of the river are Forts de Cruibeke and Zwyndrecht, the latter commanding the railroad to Ghent. Further north and right on the banks of the Scheldt are Forts St. Marie, la Perle, and St. Philip, the first two on the left bank and the last on the right, all three opposite the new harbor and docks. In the northeast Fort de Merkem guards the railroad to Rotterdam. Outside of this circle and in the south, outside of the Nethe-Rupel line, there is another complete circle of nineteen even stronger forts, at a distance from



LIEGE FORTS, SHOWING GERMAN ATTACK



SIEGE AND FALL OF ANTWERP

the city varying between five and ten miles. Starting again in the east—due east from fort one—and swinging south, these forts are named: Oeleghem, Broeckem, Kessel, Lierre, Koningshoyckt, Wavre St. Catherine, Waelhem—the last two only a few miles north of Malines—Breendonck, Liezel, Bornem, Rupelmonde, Haesdonck, Doel, Blauwgaren—the last two guarding the Scheldt at the point of its entrance into Holland, one on each bank—Stabroek, Ertbrand, Brasschaet, Schooten, and Gravenwezel. Between these outer forts there were redoubts of considerable strength, which were armed with 4-inch guns. The forts of the inner ring are placed at regular intervals of 2,200 yards and at a distance of about 3,500 yards from the enceinte of the city, which itself had powerful defenses as well.

Add to these defenses the important fact that the entire district surrounding Antwerp was subject to inundation to such a depth that all approach to the city could be made impracticable to an enemy force with heavy cannon and ammunition. Military authorities held Antwerp to be of incomparable strength and as nearly impregnable as engineering genius could make it.

During the latter part of September, 1914, several of the outer forts were subjected to bombardment, and many of these had become useless as defenses.

General von Beseler's advance was still barred by the river Nethe, upon the opposite bank of which the defense was concentrated. During the engagements which now ensued the German aircraft kept the commanders advised as to conditions behind the enemy's lines, now and then dropping bombs, apparently doing considerable damage.

On October 2, 1914, General von Beseler scattered from "Taube" aeroplanes a number of printed papers over the entire district. These circulars contained a proclamation to the Belgian soldiers, advising them to stop fighting for England and Russia and to return home to their wives and children, as Germany was ready to help and befriend them.

The Belgian Government, which had established itself in Antwerp after the occupation of Brussels, decided to leave the city as soon as possible. Two small steamers were ordered to be

held in readiness. The foreign legations also decided to go with the Government.

Throughout this day a steady fire was kept up on the nearest outer forts, but the Belgian soldiers contested every inch of ground against the German advance. This fighting continued throughout the entire day following, during which two of the minor outer forts were silenced.

Rapid progress by the Germans was very difficult owing to the peculiar conformation of the course of the river Scheldt at the point of attack. This made especially difficult the laying of concrete foundations for the heavy guns.

The first detachment of British troops, numbering about 8,000 marines, reached Antwerp on October 3, 1914. This buoyed up the spirits of the Belgian soldiers and redoubled their efforts. Under cover of the continuous fire of their guns, the Germans made determined efforts to cross the river Nethe at Waelhem. Desperate fighting, which lasted all night and until early in the morning of October 4, took place. This attempt, however, failed. Later in the day the Germans succeeded in putting a pontoon bridge in place. Troops in solid masses hurried across; but as they reached the other side some well-directed shots from the Belgian guns blew the pontoon bridge to pieces, killing many.

Throughout the night of October 4, 1914, and the day and night of October 5, the battle raged about Lierre with savage ferocity. The British marines had by this time relieved the Belgians. The German fire, however, compelled the defenders to draw back a considerable distance.

At four o'clock in the morning of October 6, 1914, the Germans succeeded in crossing the river in force, and now the defenders were obliged to give way, as the outer forts had ceased to afford them any protection. Late in the afternoon the members of the Belgian Cabinet and their official families went aboard one steamer, while the French and British Legations boarded another, both sailing early on October 7.

The Belgian troops had begun to withdraw the evening before. All the defending forces now hastened their retreat. The actual evacuation had indeed begun. Time was taken, however, to

put out of commission some thirty steamships lying at their docks and to set afire all the large oil tanks on the west side of the river Scheldt. The streets in Antwerp presented scenes of almost indescribable confusion. Even before the bombardment had been long in operation almost the entire civil population became panic-stricken. Hither and thither, wherever the crowd drifted, explosions obstructed their paths; fronts of buildings bent over and fell into the streets, in many cases crushing their occupants. Although the burgomaster had issued a proclamation advising the people to remain calm—indoors, if possible—nothing could stop the stampede.

The defending troops withdrawing through the city from the firing line destroyed everything that might possibly be of use to the enemy. The suburbs of Antwerp seemed to be ablaze in every direction; the village of Waerloos had been burning for some days; Contich, Duffel, and Lierre also, and Have, Linth, and Vieux Dieu had been destroyed by shell fire. Mortsel was practically obliterated by the Belgians clearing the range for the guns of the inner forts. In the preparation for defense the Belgians destroyed upward of ten thousand buildings within a radius of twenty miles.

The exodus of the civil population began in earnest on October 8, 1914. Some of the streets in the heart of the city were choked with people, while other streets in the same vicinity were dead and deserted. The withdrawal of the troops was well screened from the German guns, but their retreat to the west had been cut off to a great extent, and Holland was now the only refuge for many. The Germans did not use their heaviest guns and high-explosive shells in bombarding the city.

During this terrible time, in utter darkness and confusion, crowds amounting to many thousands—men, and women with babies, and children of all ages—streamed through the streets that led to the quays or to the turnpike to Holland. All sorts of vehicles, from dogcarts to motor trucks, the former drawn by dogs, men, and horses, carried the belongings of the fugitives that could not be carried away in person.

The bombardment continued with varying severity through-

out October 8, 1914. As the Germans drew nearer to the city all the inner forts on the south and east sides of the circle took part in replying to the cannonade. Some of these forts—notably two, three, four, and five—were badly battered. By afternoon the city seemed deserted—nothing but débris of fallen buildings and wreckage met the eyes, and a small remnant of the population was still struggling for escape.

Along all the wayside immense crowds of men, women, and children gathered. The railway stations were choked with struggling humanity. Their condition was pitiable. These scenes continued all day and throughout the entire night.

On the morning of October 9, 1914, the struggle to get away continued. Long lines formed on the quay where it had been reported that two boats would leave for Ostend by eleven o'clock, and all those that could pay struggled to get their passage booked. There were between 35,000 and 40,000 people on the quays, every one buoyed up by the hope that safety was in sight at last. But the boats failed to sail and a murmur of disappointment rose from this vast multitude of unfortunates.

However, there were other means of escape available, such as tugboats, plying between Flushing, Rotterdam, and other adjacent points in Holland. These tugs had no great accommodations for passengers and comparatively few people escaped by this means. No trains were scheduled to run and in despair the crowds started to cross the bridge and make for the road to the Dutch frontier. Altogether from 150,000 to 200,000 of the population of the city escaped by one means or another.

During a continuous bombardment of twelve hours the cathedral stood unharmed. The southern part of Antwerp was a desolate waste of ruins. In some streets all the homes were ablaze, the flames leaping hither and thither with the wind. The great oil tanks burning fiercely on the opposite bank of the River Scheldt were fired upon by some well-directed shots to check the blaze, a huge black volume of thick smoke now rising from the flames. To add to the difficulties and confusion the water supply had been cut off during the early stages of the bombardment through the destruction of the city's waterworks which were lo-

cated in one of the suburbs to the south, and the consequences threatened to become alarming. Everywhere fires were burning.

This was the tragic scene when the German army entered the conquered city of Antwerp on October 10, 1914. It is probable that a large part of the city would have been burned, if the Germans had not entered in time to check the conflagration. Without loss of time, forces were put to work fighting the fires and clearing the streets, propping up unsafe buildings and making order out of chaos, with the usual Teuton efficiency. As soon as the bombardment had ceased proclamations were pasted on walls and houses throughout the city urging everyone to surrender any arms in their possession and begging for a calm demeanor when the German troops pass through the streets.

About noon on October 10, 1914, a patrol of cyclist-mounted police escorted the burgomaster to the gate of the city to receive the German forces. When they entered order was restored without delay. Soldiers were immediately detached from their special command and formed into gangs under competent foremen and all put to work at once each according to his trade, fitness or adaptability. The forts that had been dismantled were hastily patched up and new guns mounted for emergency use.

On October 11, 1914, Field Marshal von der Goltz, the Governor General of Belgium, came from Brussels and made a tour of inspection of the double girdle of forts. Upon examination it was found that the actual damage done to the city by the bombardment was comparatively slight.

During the last days of Antwerp's reign of terror fully 300,000 fugitives sought shelter in Bergan-op-Zoom about twenty-five miles northward across the Dutch frontier. Most of these were in a condition almost indescribable, ragged, travel-worn, shoeless, and bespattered and hungry. Few had money; valuables or other resources. All they owned they carried on their backs or in bundles. The little Dutch town of Bergen-op-Zoom with but 15,000 inhabitants was swamped; but the Hollanders did their best to meet this terrible pressure and its citizens went without bread themselves to feed the refugees. Slowly some sort of order was organized out of the chaos and when the Dutch

Government was able to establish refugee camps under military supervision the worst was over. A majority of this vast army was by degrees distributed in the surrounding territory where tent accommodations had been completed. The good Hollanders provided for the children with especial care and sympathy. They supplied milk for the babies and children generally. Devoted priests comforted many; but military organization prevailed over all. Among the thousands of these poor refugees that crossed the frontier at Maastricht and besieged the doors of the Belgian consul there was no railing or declaiming against the horror of their situation. The pathos of lonely, staring, apathetic endurance was tragic beyond expression.

CHAPTER XXVII

YSER BATTLES—ATTACK ON YPRES

A LARGE part of the Belgian forces with some of the English marines were forced across the Dutch border, where they were promptly disarmed and interned, while the remnants of these forces retreated toward the west by way of St. Nicolas and reached Ostend on October 11 and 12, 1914, with greatly reduced numbers. Many were cut off and captured by the German forces, which entered Ghent on October 12, and pressed on to Ypres in one direction and to Lille in another. Next day, the thirteenth, they approached Ostend, forcing these Belgians who had managed to get through, to evacuate.

Bruges was occupied by the German forces on October 14, 1914, and other detachments appeared in Thielt, Daume, and Esschen on the same day, thus getting under their control the entire Kingdom of Belgium, with the exception of the northwestern corner, north of Ypres, to the coast of the channel. For Ostend, too, had fallen into their hands by October 15, after the English and Belgian troops had been taken away by an English fleet; the Belgians were transported to France where they were

re-formed while the English marines were sent back to England.

In the meantime the Germans were drawing on reenforcements from the Vosges and the Champagne districts and every day their numbers increased. West Flanders was swarming with German cavalry, and about this time they were as far west as Hazebrouck and Cassel, and only twenty-five miles distant from Dunkirk.

By October 20, 1914, the allied line was in position from Albert to the sea, a little short of 100 miles, eighty as the crow flies. From south to north the allied front was commanded by General Maud'huy from Albert to Vermelles; General Smith-Dorrien from Vermelles to Laventie, opposite Lille; General Poultney, from Laventie to Messines; General Haig from Messines to Bixschoote; General de Mitry had French and Belgian mixed troops defending the line from Bixschoote to Nieuport and the sea, supported by an English and French fleet.

For days this fleet under the British Admiral Hood had shelled the coast defenses under General von Beseler's command. As the naval guns had a far better range than General von Beseler's artillery, it was an easy matter to hold the coast at Nieuport Bains, and even six miles inland without subjecting any of the ships to the fire of the German guns.

On the German side General von Bülow held the front against General Maud'huy, the Bavarian Crown Prince against General Smith-Dorrien, while the Duke of Württemberg commanded the forces on the balance of the line to the sea. It is estimated that upward of thirty army corps covered the German front.

Throughout the balance of October, 1914, and well into November, 1914, a great many different actions and some of the heaviest fighting of this period took place all along this line. On the 21st the new German formations pressed forward in great force all along the line. On the south of the Lys the Germans assaulted Violaines. On the north of the Lys in the English center a fiercely contested action took place near La Gheir, which village the Germans captured in the morning. The German Twenty-sixth Reserve Corps pressed on to Passchendale, where they met with stout resistance from the English-Belgian forces.

On October 22 the Germans attacked from the La Bassée region and gained several small villages. Both Allies and Germans suffered immense losses. Much of the slaughter was due to the point-blank magazine fire and the intermittent shrapnel explosions from both sides.

The most savage fighting was kept up all along the line, but no advantage accrued to either side until Friday, October 23, 1914, when the Germans succeeded in crossing the Yser at St. George and forcing their way to Ramscapelle, a distance of about two miles. This was accomplished by General von Beseler's troops, opposing the mixed troops of the Belgian and French. On that night fourteen separate attacks were made by the Germans on Dixmude and they were repulsed each time.

On October 24, 1914, about 5,000 German troops crossed the canal at Schoorbakke and next day there were more to come, so for the moment it looked as though the allied line on the Yser had been broken. The struggle at this point continued until October 28, during which time the Allies contested every inch of ground. The kaiser was with the Duke of Württemberg on this day, expecting every moment that his great design to break through the lines and drive his forces to Dunkirk and Calais would be accomplished.

At the crisis the Belgians broke down the dykes and flooded the country for miles around. Heavy rains during the last weeks had swelled the Yser. The Belgians had dammed the lower reaches of the canal; the Yser lipped over its brim and spread lagoons over the flat meadows. Soon the German forces on the west bank were floundering in a foot of water, while their guns were waterlogged and deep in mud. The Germans did not abandon their efforts. The kaiser called for volunteers to carry Ramscapelle—two Württemberg brigades responded—and gained the place, but at terrible loss.

On the 30th of October, 1914, again the Württembergers advanced to the attack. They waded through sloppy fields from the bridgeheads at St. George and Schoorbakke, and by means of table tops, boards, planks and other devices crossed the deeper dykes. So furious was the attack pressed home that they won

the railway line and held their ground. They were to do some severe fighting, however, for next day French-Belgian and African mixed troops fought fiercely to drive the Germans back but failed.

Seeing their success in partially flooding the battle field, the Belgians made more breaches in the dams, and, opening the sluices in the canal, threw a flood of water greater still over the area occupied by the Germans. In seething brown waves the water rose up to the high ground at the railway near Ramscapelle. The Germans were caught in this tide and scores of them were drowned. Many escaped, some struggled to land on the Allies front and were made prisoners.

Sir John French summarized part of the fighting in Flanders, after the capture of Antwerp, in the following official report: "The Second Corps under General Smith-Dorrien was opposed by overpowering forces of Germans, but nevertheless advanced until October 18, 1914, when the German opposition compelled a reenforcement. Six days later the Lahore Division of the Indian Army was sent to support the Second Corps. On October 16, Sir Henry Rawlinson, who had covered the retreat of the Belgian army from Antwerp, with two divisions of English cavalry and two divisions of French infantry, was stationed on the line east of Ypres under orders to operate over a wide front and to keep possession of all the ground held by the Allies until the First Army Corps could reach Ypres.

"General Rawlinson was opposed by superior forces and was unable to prevent the Germans from getting large reenforcements. With four divisions holding a much wider front than their size justified he faced a rather awkward situation, as the enemy was massed from the Lys.

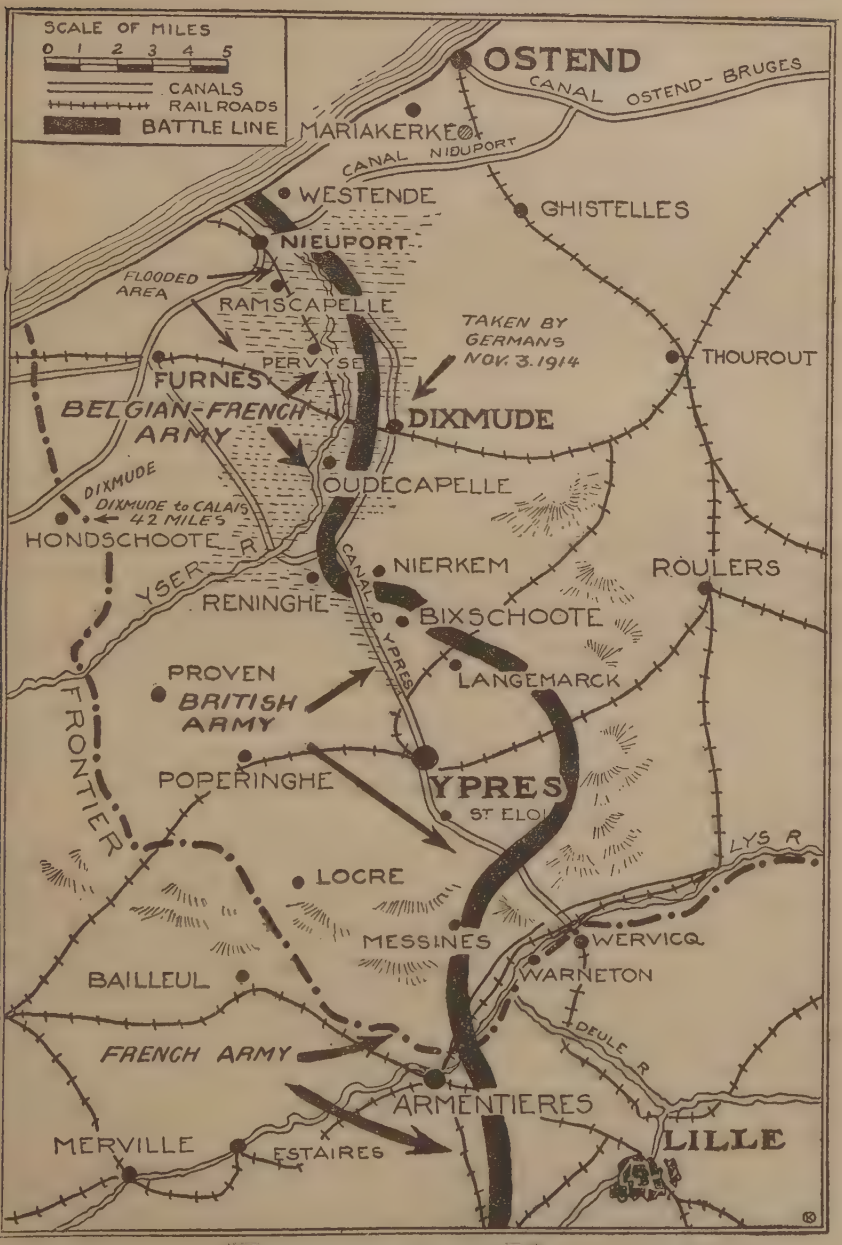
"The shattered Belgian army and the weary French troops advanced to check the Germans—but in vain. Sir Douglas Haig with the First Army Corps was sent to recapture Bruges on October 19, 1914, while the Belgian army intrenched along the Yser Canal. General Haig failed—owing to bad roads. October 21 brought the most severe attack made on the First Corps at Ypres, in the checking of which the Worcestershire Regiment did

good work. This day marked the most critical period in the battle which resulted in the recapture of the village of Gheluvelt."

South of Dixmude is one of the most historic and quaintly attractive cities of Belgium, Ypres. It is situated on a tributary of the Yser called the Yperlee, and a railway runs through it from Roulers to the main Lille-St. Ower line at Hazebrouck and a very important canal runs from the Yser in the north to the Lys at Comines.

The allied lines were held by the British First and Third Corps and several cavalry divisions, at this point all under the chief command of General Haig, while the Bavarian Crown Prince directed the movements of the German forces. On October 20, 1914, the allied line stretched—a few miles to the northeast of Ypres—from Bixschoote to the crossroads a mile and a half northwest of Zonnebeke. The cavalry only were kept busy during this day, while the other forces were making elaborate preparations for the main drive. The great attack was delivered October 21 against the point of the salient between Zonnebeke and Besselaere. The allied line on the left was so much exposed that the Twenty-second Brigade was enfiladed by the Germans at the very beginning, and in the center the Germans pierced the line held by the Royal Scots Fusiliers, with the Yorkshires on the extreme right. The fierce assaults from both sides ended in a draw for this day.

On October 22, 1914, the fighting was most severe all day; but later in the day the most violent assault of all was made by the Germans upon the First Brigade on the left. There the trenches were held by the Camerons, north of Pilkem on the Langemarck—Bixschoote road. Here the Germans broke the line and succeeded in capturing part of the Camerons—the famous Red Tartans. Further south, the Royal Scots Fusiliers were obliged to give way. The Germans pressed hard in the vicinity of Hollebeke which point opened a clear road to Ypres; but here the allied forces stood their ground. Still farther south the Essex Regiment and the Lancashire Fusiliers fought savagely, but were driven back upon Armentierre when night fell.



BATTLE FRONT IN FLANDERS

Early Friday morning, October 23, 1914, the Allies made a desperate assault upon the trenches lost by the Camerons on the previous day. The fighting culminated in a savage bayonet attack which resulted in the recapture of these trenches by the British composed of the King's Royal Rifles, the Royal West Surrey Regiment and the Northamptons.

On October 24, 1914, the Germans advanced upon the allied extreme left; but were successfully repulsed between Zonnebeke and Poelcapelle. Later in the day the Germans renewed their attack and compelled the allied troops to retire some distance.

The advance on the allied left was continued on Sunday, October 25, 1914. Repeatedly the Germans succeeded in piercing the allied lines; but at one time, even though they had broken through, a momentary lack of reserves compelled them to retreat to avoid capture. A savage enveloping attack was made during the night, north of Zandvoorde, where again the Germans broke through the allied lines, but were unable to maintain their advantage through failure of reenforcements to come up in time. The Leicester Brigade were shelled out of their trenches and were obliged to fall back to the south of the River Lys.

During the following three days—October 26, 27, 28, 1914—artillery fire was resorted to and desultory fighting and skirmishes along the entire line resulted in no noteworthy advantage to either belligerent.

Thursday, October 29, 1914, opened with clear and bracing weather which promised to continue throughout the day. The German attack which had been preparing for the past three days now broke like an irresistible wave upon the salient of the Gheluvelt crossroads, where the British First Corps was stationed. The first division was driven back from its trenches and after that the line swayed forward and backward for hours, but by two o'clock in the afternoon the position remained unchanged.

With the coming of the dawn on October 30, 1914, the fighting was resumed with even more savage determination on both sides. The hottest engagement centered about the ridge of Zandvoorde. German artillery fire cleared the allied trenches, burying many

of the British soldiers alive under mountains of earth and débris. This forced the line to retreat a full mile to Klein Zillebeke to the north. The kaiser witnessed this engagement and by his presence cheered the German soldiers on to the most desperate fighting.

On the following day October 31, 1914, the crisis came. The fighting began along the Menin-Ypres road early in the morning and advanced with great violence upon the village of Gheluvelt. The First and Third Brigades of the First Division were swept back and the First Coldstream Guards were wiped out as a unit. The whole division was driven back from Gheluvelt to the woods between Veldhoek and Hooge. The allied headquarters at Hooge were shelled. General Lomas was wounded and six of the staff officers were killed.

The Royal Fusiliers who desperately stuck to their trenches fighting savagely were cut off and destroyed. Out of a thousand but seventy soldiers remained. Between two and three o'clock there occurred the most desperate fighting seen in the battle of Ypres. At 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon the Allies recaptured Gheluvelt at the point of the bayonet and by evening the Allies had regained their position. Ypres had not been captured by the Germans by this time, but they had secured their position in all the suburbs of Ypres and had that city at their mercy, provided allied reenforcements ordered up did not obstruct their path.

The fighting still continued for part of November, 1914, but for the month of October no definite result was to be recorded.

At Ypres, on November 2, 1914, the Germans captured 2,300 English troops and many machine guns. Dixmude was stormed by the Germans on the 10th of November, and they crossed the Yser Canal, capturing the Allies position west of Langemark, also driving them out of St. Eloi. Snow and floods interfered with the fighting along the battle front. Ypres was bombarded on several occasions and was repeatedly set on fire.

November 11, 1914, was another day of severe fighting. At daybreak the Germans opened fire on the allied trenches to the

north and south of the road from Menin to Ypres. After a furious artillery fire the Germans drove their men forward in full force. This attack was carried out by the First and Fourth brigades of the Prussian Guard Corps which had been especially selected to capture Ypres if possible, since that task had proved too heavy for the infantry of the line. As the Germans surged forward they were met by a frontal fire from the allied lines, and as they were moving diagonally across part of the allied front, they were also attacked on the flank by the English artillery. Though the casualties of the Germans were enormous before they reached the English lines, such was their resolution and the momentum of the mass that, in spite of the splendid resistance of the English troops, the Germans succeeded in breaking through the allied lines in several places near the road. They penetrated some distance into the woods behind the English trenches, where some of the bloodiest fighting of the entire war took place.

On November 12, 1914, comparative quiet reigned and with the exception of artillery duels and some desultory fighting no results were obtained on either side. The British report makes this comment on this attempt upon Ypres: "Their (the Prussian Guard Corps') dogged perseverance in pursuance of their objective claims wholehearted admiration.

"The failure of one great attack, heralded as it was by an impassioned appeal to the troops made in the presence of the emperor himself, but carried out by partially trained men, has been only the signal for another desperate effort in which the place of honor was assigned to the corps d'élite of the German army.

"It must be admitted that the Guard Corps has retained that reputation for courage and contempt of death which it earned in 1870, when Emperor William I, after the battle of Gravelotte, wrote: 'My Guard has formed its grave in front of St. Privat,' and the swarms of men who came up bravely to the British rifles in the woods around Ypres repeated the tactics of forty-four years ago, when their dense columns, toiling up the slopes of St. Privat, melted away under the fire of the French."

Ypres was now but a name. Nothing but a mass of ruins reminded the world of its previous quaint splendor. For Ypres had been rich in historic buildings and monuments of past days.

With the fall of Antwerp the Germans had made every effort to push forward strong forces toward the west and had hastened to bring up new army corps which had been hurriedly organized, their object being to drive the Allies out of Belgium and break through to Dunkirk and Calais. Altogether they collected 250,000 fresh men. Eventually the Germans had north of La Bassée about fourteen corps and eight cavalry divisions, a force of 750,000 men, with which to attempt to drive the Allies into the sea. In addition there was immensely powerful armament and heavy siege artillery, which also had been brought up from around Antwerp. But in spite of these strong forces it became clearly evident by the middle of November that the attempt to break through to Calais had failed for the time being. The flooding of the Yser marks the end of the main struggle for Calais. The battle fronts had shifted. Between them there was a mile or two of mud and water. The Belgians had lost a quarter of their effectives. The Germans had evacuated the west bank of the Yser and were obliged to return to the point from which they had started.

CHAPTER XXVIII

ATTACKS ON LA BASSEE AND ARRAS

WHILE the engagement on the Yser was in progress in October, 1914, fierce fighting was kept up in the second section of the battle front, pivoting on Givenchy to the south and running east to the north of the La Bassée-Lille road. In this section the forces of the Crown Prince of Bavaria opposed the troops under the command of General Smith-Dorrien.

From October 1 to 3, 1914, considerable fighting went on in the flats east of Arras between Lens and the River Scarpe. This re-

sulted in the retirement of the Allies on the 4th. The Germans began to bombard Arras, keeping it up until the 6th, when their attempt to take the city next day was successfully repulsed. On October 8, the Germans, then holding Douai and Lens, were shelling Lille, then held by the British territorials. For the next two weeks artillery duels alternated with trench fighting and skirmishing.

The main attack at La Bassée covered fully ten days, lasting from October 22, 1914, to November 2, 1914. The first severe fighting came as has already been mentioned, on October 22, 1914. The British were driven out of the village of Violaines, which is situated on the road between Lorgies and Givenchy, and General Smith-Dorrien was compelled to retreat to the village of Faugissant, to the south of Lavantie.

On October 24, 1914, the Germans attacked heavily along the entire line, and the First Gordon Highlanders were driven out of their trenches. For three days the most savage fighting continued, resulting in the capture of Neuve Chapelle by the Germans on October 27, which was defended by East Indian troops. The fighting was desperate on both sides and became much confused, as units here and there had succeeded in breaking through their respective opponents' lines. All of this day and the next, October 28, this struggle continued, but the Germans maintained the ground they had won, forcing the allied forces to retire in order to re-form their lines.

On October 29, 1914, the Germans attacked at Festubert, and gained several of the allied trenches after a severe struggle lasting throughout the day. Again the Germans maintained their new position, compelling the Indian troops to retire to the defense of the La Bassée gate, where they were joined by several British brigades and the Second Corps Artillery.

October 30, 1914, was consumed in continuous artillery duels, which held the lines while the troops enjoyed much needed rest.

On October 31, 1914, the Indian forces were again savagely attacked by the Germans whose machine guns enfiladed them in their trenches. This attack has become noted for the great loss of British officers commanding the Hindus.

Concurrent with this fighting the Germans also made the most savage onslaughts further south, with the object of capturing Arras. The main attack against this important French city began on October 20, 1914, and lasted six days until the evening of October 26. The Germans in having possession of Lens had a great advantage, as they were thereby enabled to threaten the allied left center, which was stationed to the west of Lens; for, just south from the town, ran a railway which connected with the main line three miles east of Arras, called the Arras-Douai-Lille line. This gave the Germans a perfect system of lateral communications.

The German general, Von Bülow, commanding the Prussian Guard Corps led the attack on October 24, 1914, when he pushed his forces, fighting for every inch of the ground, to within gun range of the city of Arras. All day the most desperate fighting continued and had not General Maud'huy received the reenforcements which hurriedly came up just when needed the northern gates of Arras would have been gained by the Germans, who were held back in a position near enough, however, to subject Arras to another bombardment and the shell fire from this position rained upon Arras to the end of the month and some six days into November.

From the date of the entry of the French into Alsace on August 7, 1914, the battle front in France extended from the Swiss frontier, north through western Alsace, thence in a northwesterly direction to a point where the line met the front of the German forces advancing on Paris.

On October 1, 1914, this battle front extended in an unbroken line from Switzerland to the city of Douai in northeastern France. The Crown Prince of Bavaria commanded in the first section from Alsace to midway between Nancy and Verdun; the Crown Prince of Prussia directed the Verdun section reaching from west of Thiaucourt to Montfaucon; the Duke of Württemberg to Massiges; General von Hausen thence to Bery-du-Bac; General von Bülow to a point directly north of Soissons; General von Kluck in a northwesterly direction to a point west of Noyon and onward to the north and northeast to Douai, which

is about fifteen miles northeast of Arras, from which point north the campaign has been described. The French army opposing this German front was under the supreme command of General Joffre. The commanding officers in the various sectors of this front were being continually changed, making it difficult to name the commanders in each sector, except when some more or less noteworthy engagement had taken place along the line. The battle front here described did not materially change throughout the months of October, 1914, to February 1, 1915. Continual engagements took place along this entire front—a gain of a few yards here balanced by a loss of a like distance elsewhere.

Both belligerents had securely intrenched themselves. The pickax and spade were far more in use than the rifle, so that now cold weather coming on, the soldiers on both sides of the front were able to make the trenches quite comfortable. In many instances they laid down plank floors and lined the walls with boards, put up stoves, constructed sleeping bunks and tables, stools and benches, and even decorated the rooms thus evolved with anything suitable for the purpose. Pictures and photographs from home were the favorite decorations. All this was impossible for their brethren in the north and in Flanders, where the activities of the conflict subjected the soldiers to continual changes and removals.

The main objective of the Germans was the French fortresses Belfort, Epinal, Toul, and Verdun, for these obstructed the march to Paris. The continual onslaughts and counterassaults made upon this line left it practically unchanged during the month of October, 1914, in which time no engagements worthy of the name "battle" occurred. The fighting in the north had been so desperate that it completely obscured the activities on the entire line to the south.

The net gains during the months of October and November, 1914, for either belligerent were practically nil. From Belfort in the south to Arras in the north the advance or retreat in any given section was but a matter of yards; a ridge, a farm, a hill, or other choice gun position, the farther bank of a rivulet or stream or canal occupied or captured—here by the French, there by the

Germans—generally proved to be but temporary possessions and wasted efforts.

It was incidents such as these that made up the record of events along this line. During all this time the military aeroplanes were busy dropping explosives upon the enemy's lines, and extending their operations far to the rear, circling above the larger towns and cities, doing considerable damage in many places. But this was not the only purpose of these daring sky pilots; for the principal object in flying over the adversary's country was to make observations and report movements of troops. In this respect the aeroplane had done immense service throughout the campaign.

CHAPTER XXIX

GENERAL MOVEMENTS ON THE FRENCH AND FLANDERS FRONTS

WE have seen that at the end of November, 1914, Ypres was still in the Allies' hands, though the Germans were exerting a fierce pressure in that region, and were gradually, even if very slowly, getting closer and closer to it.

At the beginning of December, 1914, the Germans drew their forces close up to Ypres, so closely in fact that they could bring into play their small-caliber howitzers, and before many hours Ypres was in flames in many places. The allied forces fought fiercely to compel the Germans to withdraw. Hand-to-hand fighting, bayonet charges, and general confusion was the order of the day. Thousands of men would creep out of their holes in the ground and crawl, availing themselves of whatever covering presented itself, to some vantage point and there stand up as one man and charge directly into the adversary's ranks.

All this was part of the general scheme worked out miles from the spot where the conflict was going on. There in some quaint little town occupying some out-of-the-way house was the Gen-

eral Staff. The rooms were filled with officers; the walls were hung with large and small field and detail maps, upon which were plainly marked the name of every commanding officer and the forces under his command. Every detail of the armies' strength —names of the commanders, and any other detail was plainly in view.

It was here decided to turn the entire command of the allied forces along the Yser over to the British to avoid confusion. It was well that this was done just at this time, for on December 3, 1914, the Germans made a fierce onslaught along the entire front of thirteen miles between Ypres and Dixmude, bringing into use a great number of stanch rafts propelled by expert watermen, thus carrying thousands of the German forces over and along the Ypres River.

Again the belligerents came to a hand-to-hand conflict, and so well directed was the allied counterattack that no advantage to the Germans was obtained. For three days this severe fighting continued. The struggle was most sharp between Dixmude and the coast at Westende, where the Germans hoped to break through the allied lines, and thus crumple up their entire front, making a free passage.

On December 7, 1914, the French captured Vermelles, a minor village a few miles southwest of La Bassée. This little village had been the center of a continuous struggle for mastership for nearly two months. At last the French occupied this rather commanding point, important to the Allies, as it afforded an excellent view over a wide stretch of country occupied by the Germans.

The German Staff headquarters were removed from Roulers, which is about twelve miles distant from Ypres, on December 8, 1914, from the vicinity of Ypres, while their own forces had been concentrated upon Dixmude, twelve miles to the north. This town had suffered severely before, but the allied forces using what shelter they could improvise, were doing considerable damage from this point. Therefore the Germans began to bombard the place.

On December 9, 1914, the Germans succeeded in gaining

slightly toward Ypres. Farther north they were by this time also in a position to take Furnes under fire. This town lies on the frontier between Belgium and France, in the path of some of the most savage onslaughts on the part of the Germans to break through the allied lines in order to reach the channel towns of Dunkirk and Calais.

On December 10, 1914, the allied forces made an ineffectual attack on Roulers, which the German General Staff had just left. South of Ypres the allied forces made a severe attack upon the town of Armentières, about eight miles from Ypres, but gained no permanent advantage.

During this time the Germans had also so far succeeded in consolidating their positions in the neighborhood of Ostend, that they could put their heavy guns in position near the shores of that famous watering place. This was a very necessary precaution to meet the attacks of English gunboats, and even larger cruisers that were patrolling that coast.

On December 12, 1914, the severest fighting was along the Yser Canal, which was crossed and recrossed several times.

On December 13, 1914, the Allies succeeded in repulsing the Germans on the River Lys, where for three days the Germans had inaugurated a hot offensive. These engagements were exact counterparts of the fighting at other points in Flanders, where both opponents were apparently well matched, and where advantages were won and lost in rapid succession.

There was severe fighting also on December 14, 1914, extending along the entire front in Flanders from Nieuport to below Ypres. In the north the Germans made severe onslaughts, all more or less held up or repulsed by the Belgians, French, and English. The fighting was hottest near Nieuport, where the Allies made some small temporary gains. Besides the three armies participating in the conflict, the British fleet also took part in bombarding the German coast positions. Three British barges equipped with naval machine guns entered the River Yser in order to cooperate in the fighting. These boats took the two villages Lombaertzyde and St. Georges.

In this action some of the heaviest fighting was done by the

French marines. Some slight advantages were also gained by the Allies in the neighborhood of St. Eloi and Klein Zillebeke.

Following these minor successes, attack was made upon the German lines on the west side of Wytschaete, a village which the Germans had succeeded in holding during the great battle of Ypres. To the west of this village is a wood called the Petit Bois, and to the southwest is the Maedelsteed spur, an eminence on hilly ground. From both of these places the Germans covered the village, prepared to hold it against all comers.

Major Duncan, commanding the Scots, and Major Baird leading the Royal Highlanders, attacked the Petit Bois, and in the flare of terrible machine gun and rifle fire, carried a trench west of the woods, while the Gordon Highlanders advanced upon the spur, taking the first trench. They were, however, obliged to fall back to the position from which they had started, with no advantage gained. This engagement at Wytschaete gave a good illustration of the difficulty of fighting in heavy, winter ground, devoid of cover, and so water-logged that any speed in advance was next to impossible. Just prior to the battle the ground had thawed, and the soldiers sank deep into the mud at every step they took.

On December 15, 1914, the Germans attacked a little to the south of Ypres, but no definite result was obtained. On the following day the Allies replied by an onslaught at Dixmude with a similar result. The Germans attempted to turn and strike at Westende the next day.

Roulers was temporarily occupied by the Allies on December 18, 1914, and in another location, about twenty-five miles farther southwest, in the neighborhood of Givenchy, the Allies' Indian troops were put to the test. The attack was launched on the morning of the 19th.

The Lahore and the Meerut divisions both took part. The Meerut division succeeded in capturing a trench; but a little later on a counterattack, launched by the Germans, forced the Indians back. The Lahore division, including the First Highland Light Infantry and the Fourth Gurkhas, took two lines of the enemy's trenches with hardly any casualties. These captured trenches

were at once occupied, and when they were full to capacity, the Germans exploded the previously prepared mines, and blew up the entire Hindu force.

At daylight on the morning of December 20, 1914, the Germans commenced a heavy artillery fire along the entire front. This was followed by an infantry charge along the entire line between Givenchy and La Quinque Rue to the north. The defense of Givenchy was in the hands of the India Sirhind Brigade, under General Brunker. At ten o'clock the Sirhinds became confused and fled, enabling the Germans to capture Givenchy. The Fifty-seventh Rifles and the Ninth Bhopals were stationed north of La Bassée Canal and east of Givenchy, and the Connaught Rangers were waiting at the south of the canal. The Forty-seventh Sikhs were sent to support the Sirhind Brigade, with the First Manchesters, the Fourth Suffolks, and two battalions of French Provincials, the entire force being under command of General Carnegy. All these mixed forces now essayed a combined counterattack in order to recover the ground lost by the Sirhind Brigade, but this failed.

The Allies called up reserves and re-formed the ranks broken by that day's reverses. With the Seventh Dragoon Guards under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lemprière, they began another attack. This, too, failed. When the Sirhind Brigade fell back, the Seaforth Highlanders were left entirely exposed. The Fifty-eighth Rifles went to the support of their left. Throughout the entire afternoon the Seaforths had made strenuous efforts to capture the German trenches to the right and left of their position. Upon the arrival of the Fifty-eighth the fighting redoubled in ferocity, but no advance was made. Finally word was given to retreat. The Allies lost heavily in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

The First Brigade was detached, and by midnight it had reached Bethune, about five miles west of Givenchy. Sir Douglas Haig was ordered to move also, the entire First Division in support of the exhausted Indian troops.

Action was begun on December 20, 1914, early in the afternoon by a simultaneous attack, and was continued until nightfall

without important results. The next morning General Haig in person took the command, but little ground was gained.

While this contest was in progress around Givenchy, the Germans took possession of the city of Arras, ten miles to the south.

Between December 23 and 30, 1914, the Belgian army, strongly reenforced by French troops, began a series of violent attacks upon the German lines; but the Germans replied by a ceaseless bombardment of Nieuport, which is about a mile inland. No results of importance were obtained on either side.

The last week of December, 1914, bore a relieving holiday aspect, for it seemed as though by general consent the carnival of blood was to be considered not consonant with the solemnity of the season. But for all that the French succeeded in blowing up some German trenches with a new howitzer they were anxious to try out, and the Belgian-French forces retook St. Georges in northern Flanders.

St. Georges had been held by the Germans for some time; the village stands on the right hand of the Yser, and it was the only position they retained on that side of the river. It seems from the very ease with which the village was taken that the Germans felt their position there untenable, and withdrew to their own side of the river in order to enjoy a quiet Christmas with their comrades, whose singing of Christmas songs was forever being wafted over that river of blood. Although the general action continued on both sides, no serious battles are to be recorded in Flanders for the balance of the year 1914.

CHAPTER XXX

OPERATIONS AROUND LA BASSEE AND GIVENCHY

ON the whole, the results obtained during the first days of 1915 on the Belgian battle front favored the Germans. Of this front the Belgians held but three miles more or less, and the British were defending a line of about twenty miles, while the French covered the balance of about twelve miles, all of which included about the entire front in Flanders from the dunes at Nieuport on the Channel to Armentières in the south, a line—by no means straight—about thirty-five miles in length.

Activities along the extended front in the Champagne district having proved successful for the German forces to a considerable extent, the General Staff turned its attention now to the La Bassée region.

There was good tactical reason for this move, because the British were seriously threatening the position, straddling La Bassée Canal where it flows between Cuinchy and Givenchy, and there was danger that they might capture La Bassée, where the Germans held a salient of considerable strategical importance, as it covered their line of communication to the south.

Previous successful operations by the British at Richebourg and Festubert north of Givenchy, and at Vermelles, south of Cuinchy, evidently prompted the Germans to attempt a counter-attack. Besides it was desirable for the Germans to test the strength of the Allies at this point, and to do this with some measure of success the Germans massed a considerable force for this purpose.

Beginning about January 14, 1915, the British met with varying and minor successes and defeats in this region, but no noteworthy action had taken place for upward of ten days, until January 25, under the eye of the German Kaiser, the principal attack, which had been carefully planned, took place.

On the morning of January 25, 1915, a demonstration along

the front from Festubert to Vermelles and as far north as Ypres and Pervyse was inaugurated.

The Germans began to shell Bethune, which was within the allied lines about eight or nine miles west of La Bassée. An hour later, in the neighborhood of nine o'clock, following up heavy artillery fire, the Fifty-sixth Prussian Infantry and the Seventh Pioneers advanced south of the canal, which runs eastward from Bethune, where the British line formed a salient from the canal forward to the railway near Cuinchy, and thence back to the Bethune and La Bassée road where the British joined the French forces.

This salient was occupied by the Scots and the Coldstream Guards. The Germans were obliged to advance by the road, as the fields were too soft for the passage of the troops; even the roads were in a terrible condition, deep ruts and thick, sticky mud greatly retarding the onward march of the German forces. But the Allies fared little better in this respect. In fact the entire engagement was fought out in a veritable sea of mud and slush.

Well-directed artillery fire by the Germans blew up the British trenches in this salient, and the Germans at once penetrated the unsupported British line. The Germans also had the advantage of an armored train, which they ran along the tracks from La Bassée almost into Bethune, sufficiently close to throw considerable shell fire into this town.

The Germans advanced in close formation, throwing hand grenades. They came on so rapidly and with such momentum that the Guards, trying in vain to stem the tide with the bayonet, were overwhelmed, and the British, in spite of desperate resistance, were forced back step by step.

At some points the distance between the trenches was so small that it was utterly impossible to stop the onrush from one trench to the other. The Germans swept and broke through the British lines, treading their fallen opponents under foot as they advanced. At this point the British turned and fled, as there was no hope of successful resistance.

As the great momentum forced the German advance through

the allied lines into the open field beyond and was joined by a heavy column, which had debouched from the vicinity of Auchy, British guns opened a murderous fire and inflicted terrible slaughter upon these ranks.

The Coldstream and the Scots Guards retreated to their second line of defense, where they joined others of their command held in reserve there. Once again they turned to meet the oncoming Germans, and again were forced to give way, leaving the Germans in possession of all the ground previously gained. The remnants of the Guards retreated until they were met by the London-Scottish regiment sent to reenforce them. Here they halted while a counterattack was being organized by the First Royal Highlanders, part of the Camerons, and the Second King's Rifle Corps which also came up.

At one o'clock on January 25, 1915, and with the cooperation of the French on their right, this rapidly improvised force moved forward, making unobstructed progress on their wings by the canal and the road. For some reason their center was delayed and held back. When they did finally arrive and pressed forward with a rush to meet the German forces, who were ready to receive them, the impact was fearful, and the casualties on both sides enormous; but no gains were made by the Allies, and the Germans held the ground they had won. At the height of the battle the Second Royal Sussex rushed into the fray in support of their hard-pressed comrades, but all to no purpose, for these as the others were forced back to the rear of their starting point with but a fraction of their forces remaining to report the events of the day.

While this terrible slaughter was in progress, the French left on the other side of La Bassée road, which separated the Allies at this point, had been attacked by the right of the German line, and driven back to a considerable distance, but not as far back as the British, so that the French left was in advance of the British right and badly exposed to flank attack from the northward.

This obliged the entire allied forces to retreat some distance farther to the rear, and as night came on and the severity of the

action had ceased, the Allies had an opportunity to realign their positions and somewhat strengthen the same by the First Guard Brigade which now came up, showing the terrible suffering to which they had been subjected. Finally, however, it was found advisable to withdraw the Guard altogether and replace them by the First Infantry Brigade.

Now the German tactical idea became clear. It was to force the British to concentrate on the exposed line between Festubert and Givenchy, north of the canal, and then to turn the British right by the German forces in their new position just south of the canal, thus calling for simultaneous action on both sides of the canal.

The Germans delivered an equally severe attack upon the allied position in the village of Givenchy, about a mile north of the canal, which bounded the scene of the attack just described. As in the other attack, the Germans opened action by severe artillery fire, using high-explosive shells, and after due preparation, at about 8.15 in the morning, the infantry advanced, as is customary with the Germans, in close formation. The British met this advance by somewhat weak artillery fire, which, it was afterward explained was due to continued interruption of the telephonic communications between the observers and the batteries in the fight. However, as it was, this fire, added to the machine gun and rifle fire from the trenches, served to turn the German advance from their original direction, with the result that they crowded together in the northeast corner of Givenchy after passing over the first-line trenches of the Allies' front. Their momentum carried the Germans far into the center of the village, with remarkably few casualties considering the murderous fire to which they had been subjected throughout their impetuous advances.

In the village of Givenchy, however, the Second Welsh Regiment and the First South Wales Borderers, which had been stationed there and held in reserve, gave the Germans a warm reception, and when the First Royal Highlanders came up they delivered a fierce counterattack. In this they were supported by the fire of the French artillery, which assistance, however,

proved costly to the Allies, as the French fire and bursting shells killed friend and foe alike. Street fighting became savage, amid the explosions of shells sent to enliven the occasion by the French. This concluded the action for the day and when the smoke cleared away both sides found their position comparatively little changed and nothing but the thinned ranks of the combatants reminded the observer that the most severe kind of fighting had taken place for the best part of a day.

The following day, January 26, 1915, the action was resumed, and the attack opened along the Bethune and La Bassée road. This soon died out, as though by general consent, each side re-occupying their position of the previous evening.

But on Friday, January 29, 1915, early in the morning, the Germans again opened with severe artillery fire which directed its attention particularly to the British line, where the First Army Corps lay between La Bassée Canal and the Bethune road near Cutchy. After an hour's shelling the Germans sent one battalion of the Fourteenth Corps toward the redoubt, and two battalions of the same corps were sent to the north and south of this redoubt. Now upon this point and to the north of it stood the Sussex Regiment and to the south of it the Northamptonshire Regiment. The attack was severe, but the defense was equal to it and the net results were summed up in the casualty lists on both sides. An attack upon the French, south of Bethune, on the same day met with like results. The great German objective was to open another road to Dunkirk and Calais, and had they been successful in the engagements of the past few days it is probable that they would have succeeded.

To the north in the coast district the Belgians had succeeded in flooding a vast area, which served for the time to separate the combatants for a considerable distance, obliging the Germans to resort to rafts, boats and other floating apparatus to carry on a somewhat haphazard offensive and resulting in nothing more than a change from gunfire slaughter to drowning. The immense inconvenience attendant to this mode of warfare decided the Germans to drain this area and they succeeded in doing this by the end of January, 1915.

On the other hand the Belgians captured two German trenches in the north on January 17, 1915, and the British sent a force to attack Lille on January 18. The Belgian trenches were reoccupied by the Germans and the Lille attack was successfully repulsed.

Then, for a week, there was nothing of importance until January 23, 1915, when the Germans made a strong attack upon Ypres which was repulsed. On January 24 the Germans recaptured St. Georges and bombarded a few of the towns and villages harboring allied troops.

The Belgians continued in their endeavor to flood the German position along the Yser, on January 25, 1915, and succeeded in obliging their opponents to vacate for a time at least, and on the last day of January allied forces consisting of Zouaves, Gurkhas and other Indian companies made an attack upon the German trenches upon the dunes at Lombaertzyde, gaining a temporary advantage at an expense of considerable loss in casualties.

In reviewing the activities during the month of January, 1915, the disagreeable state of the weather must be taken into consideration; this resulted in terrible suffering, to which the battling forces were subjected during the actual fighting and even more so while at rest, either on the open field or in the questionable comfort of an inhospitable and leaky trench.

While every effort was made by the respective General Staffs to supply their fighting troops with such comforts as were absolutely necessary to keep body and soul together and in trim for the next day's work, little could be accomplished and it is a marvel how these poor soldiers did withstand the rigorous weather which blighted the prospect of victory, so dear to all who wear a uniform.

CHAPTER XXXI

END OF SIX MONTHS' FIGHTING IN THE WEST

THERE were few military movements on the French battle front during December, 1914, along the Aisne, the Oise and in the northern Champagne. The fighting was mostly artillery duels and skirmishes by separate units. In the Argonne, however, the Crown Prince of Germany was active and there, as well as along the Moselle and on the heights of the Vosges, many engagements were fought out resulting in varying advantages to either opponent. Both sides had been strongly intrenched and the ground was covered by snow to great depths, making progress impossible except upon skis and snowshoes.

On December 3, 1914, the French captured Burnhaupt, a hill east of Mülhausen in Upper Alsace, only to give up their advantage after a German counterattack. On December 16 the Germans attacked in the Woevre region and in Alsace; but were repulsed the following day. On December 31, 1914, the French attacked Steinbach in Alsace, but were driven out again.

The New Year of 1915 opened gently along the battle front in France below Arras. The first large movement in 1915 began on January 8, at Soissons. This city lies on both banks of the river Aisne and was in the possession of the French. The French forces attacked during a drenching rain, pushing up the rising ground to the north with their heavy guns, regardless of the soft ground which rapidly turned to deep mud and slush. They succeeded in carrying the first line of German trenches on a front a mile wide, thus gaining the top of the hill, which gave them an excellent position for their artillery. The next day the Germans counterattacked, but failed to dislodge the French.

Nothing occurred on Sunday, January 10, 1915, but on Monday, about noon, January 11, the Germans came on with great force. The delay on the part of the Germans was due to their awaiting reenforcements then on the road to Soissons. For four

days there had been a steady downpour of rain which had not even stopped at this time. The River Aisne was much swollen and some of the bridges had been carried away, cutting off all supplies for the French, who were slowly giving way but fighting desperately.

On January 12, 1915, and on the 13th the French were driven down the slopes in a great rush. This predicament was a terrible one—the onrushing Germans 500 feet in front of them and the swollen river making successful retreat impossible, with the ground between almost impassable with mud and slush. French reserves had improvised a pontoon bridge across the Aisne at Missy, in the rear of their now precarious position. This bridge was just strong enough to carry the men and ammunition; but not the heavy guns. The retreat turned into a rout—a general stampede for the bridge and river.

The slaughter was terrible, the river swollen as it was seemed choked with floating soldiers. The few who safely got across the bridge and those who were successful in reaching the farther bank of the Aisne alive, reached Soissons eventually. The German gain in prisoners and booty was enormous and their gain in ground advanced their line a full mile, on a front extending five miles to Missy and a little beyond. The Germans strongly intrenched their new position without loss of time.

Farther along this front, in the neighborhood of Perthes, a less important engagement took place. The Germans, under General von Einem, opposed General Langle de Cary and his French forces. The results of this engagement were negligible.

On January 18, 1915, a savage attack by the Germans was successfully repulsed at Tracy-le-Val and on the 19th the French made an assault upon the German position at St. Mihiél, in the Verdun section without gaining any ground. Farther north on this section the French pressed on and gained a little ground near the German fortress Metz; but the very vicinity of this fortress counterbalanced this gain.

On January 21, 1915, the Germans recaptured the Le Prêtre woods near St. Mihiél, and next day the belligerents fought a fierce engagement in the Vosges without advantage to either side.

NÔTRE DAME OF RHEIMS

RUINED BY

GERMAN SHELLS

SOLDIERS AND PRISONERS OF GERMANY · BELGIUM
AND FRANCE · FIRST AID TO THE WOUNDED

German lookouts, wearing the distinctive spiked German helmet, are stationed in a treetop overlooking the battle front. The branches aid in screening them

Copyright, International News Service

A body of German prisoners on their way to Paris under escort of French cuirassiers. The country people line the roadway to see them pass

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Belgian soldiers—the famous Louvain Lancers, accompanied by an aviation corps—coming up to take positions near the coast in northern France

Two cuirassiers—French cavalrymen who wear a cuirass or breastplate—have dismounted to give aid to a wounded comrade

Copyright, Paul Thompson

An injured British aviator cared for by a Red Cross doctor. Airmen who have been wounded often bring their machines to a safe landing

Copyright, Underwood & Underwood

The choir and nave of Nôtre Dame, Rheims, before the bombardment which destroyed its matchless carvings and stained-glass windows

The ruins of Nôtre Dame, the wonderful cathedral at Rheims, which was shelled by the Germans. The statuary and carvings remaining about the entrances are protected by timbers

Copyright, International News Service

French sailors who have landed on the southwestern coast of Belgium making a jovial feast of their dinner ashore

Prince Eitel, the second son of the Kaiser, commanded an attack upon Thann in Alsace on January 25, 1915, but was repulsed by the French defenders.

On January 28, 1915, the Germans made some gains in the Vosges and in Upper Alsace, but in their attempt to cross the River Aisne on the 29th they were unsuccessful.

January 30, 1915, brought some successes to the Germans in the Argonne forest, where throughout the month the most savage fighting was going on in thick underbrush and from tree tops.

PART II—NAVAL OPERATIONS

CHAPTER XXXII

STRENGTH OF THE RIVAL NAVIES

SEA fights, sea raids, and the hourly expectation of a great naval battle—a struggle for the control of the seas between modern armadas—held the attention of the world during the first six months of the Great War. These, with the adventures of the *Emden* in the waters of the Far East, the first naval fight off Helgoland, the fight off the western coast of South America, the sinking of the *Lusitania,* and the exploits of the submarines—held the world in constant expectancy and threatened to involve neutral nations, thus causing a collapse of world trade and dragging all the peoples of the earth into the maelstrom of war.

This chapter will review the navies as they gather for action. It will follow them through the tense moments on shipboard—the days of watching and waiting like huge sea dogs tugging at the leash. Interspersed are heroic adventures which have added new tales of valor to the epics of the sea.

The naval history of the great European conflict begins, not with the first of the series of declarations of war, but with the preliminary preparations. The appointment of Admiral von Tirpitz as Secretary of State in Germany in 1898 is the first decisive movement. It was in that year that the first rival to England as mistress of the world's seas, since the days of the Spanish Armada, peeped over the horizon. Two years before the beginning of the present century, Von Tirpitz organized a campaign, the object of which was to make Ger-

many's navy as strong as her military arm. A law passed at that time created the present German fleet; supplementary laws passed in 1900 and 1906 through the Reichstag by this former plowboy caused the German navy to be taken seriously, not only by Germans but by the rest of the world. England, jealous of her sea power, then began her maintenance of two ships for each one of her rival's. Germany answered by laying more keels, till the ratio stood three to two, instead of two to one.

Two years before the firing of the pistol shot at Sarajevo, which precipitated the Great War, the British admiralty announced that henceforth the British naval base in the Mediterranean would be Gibraltar instead of Malta. Conjectures were made as to the significance of this move; it might have meant that England had found the pace too great and had deliberately decided to abandon her dominance of the eastern Mediterranean; or that Gibraltar had been secretly reequipped as a naval base. What it did mean was learned when the French Minister of Marine announced in the following September that the entire naval strength of France would thereafter be concentrated in the Mediterranean. This was the first concrete action of the *entente cordiale*—the British navy, in the event of war, was to guard the British home waters and the northern ports of France; the French navy was to guard the Mediterranean, protecting French ports as well as French and British shipping from "the Gib" to the Suez.

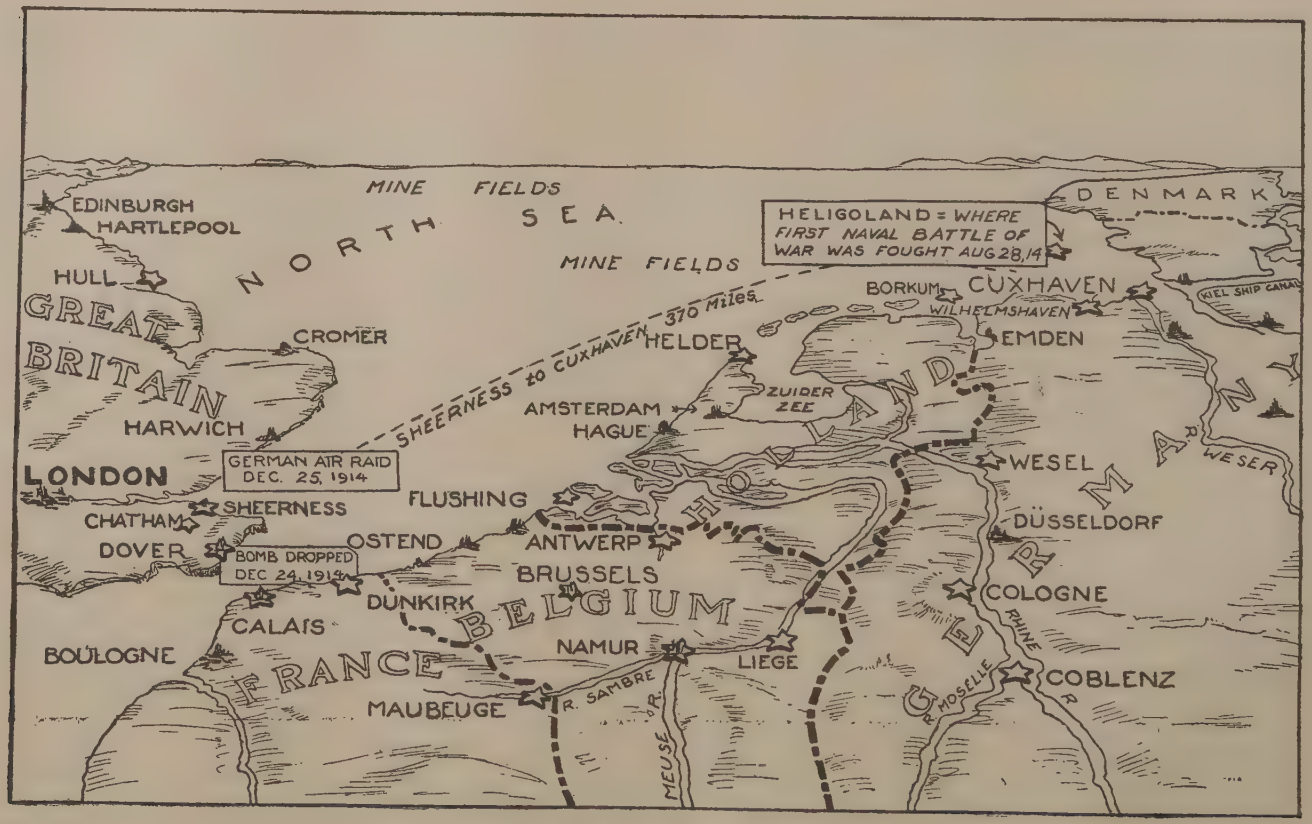
What was the comparative strength of these naval combinations when the war started?

From her latest superdreadnoughts down to her auxiliary ships, such as those used for hospital purposes, oil carrying and repairing, England had a total of 674 vessels. Without consideration of ages and types this total means nothing, and it is therefore necessary to examine her naval strength in detail. She had nine battleships of 14,000 tons displacement each, built between 1895 and 1898—the *Magnificent, Majestic, Prince George, Jupiter, Cæsar, Mars, Illustrious, Hannibal,* and *Victorious*—with engines developing 12,000 horsepower that sent them through the water at 17.5 knots, protected with from nine

to fourteen inches of armor, and prepared to inflict damage on an enemy with torpedoes shot from under and above the water, and with four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch guns, sixteen 3-inch guns, and twenty guns of smaller caliber but of quicker firing possibilities.

Her next class was that of the *Canopus*—the *Goliath, Vengeance, Ocean, Albion,* and *Glory*—2,000 tons lighter than the first class named above, but more modern in equipment and construction, having been built between the years 1900 and 1902. Their motive power was heavier, being 13,500 horsepower, and their speed was almost a knot faster. Increase in the power of naval guns had made unnecessary any increase in the thickness of their armor, and consequently ranged from 6 to 12 inches in thickness. Their armament was about the same as that of the older class, but each carried two more torpedo tubes.

Discussion in naval circles throughout the world turned then to the question of whether it were better to build heavier ships with heavier armament, or to build lighter and faster ships designed to "hit and get away." The British authorities inclined toward the former view, and between 1901 and 1904 the British navy was augmented with the *Implacable, London, Bulwark, Formidable, Venerable, Queen, Irresistible,* and *Prince of Wales* —each of the heretofore unheard-of displacement of 15,000 tons. In spite of their size they were comparatively fast, having an average speed of 18 knots; they did not need, and were not equipped with heavier armor, having plates as thin as 3 inches and as thick as 12. They were built to "take punishment," and therefore they had no greater armament than the vessels previously named. The naval program of 1903 and 1904 also included the *Duncan, Albemarle, Russell, Cornwallis,* and *Exmouth,* each 1,000 tons lighter than the ships of the *Implacable* type, but with the same equipment, defensive and offensive, and of the same speed. And in the same program, as if to offset the argument for heavier and stronger ships, there were included the lighter and faster ships, *Swiftsure* and *Triumph,* displacing only 11,500 tons, but making 19 knots. Their speed permitted and necessitated lighter armor—10 inches through at the thick-



GERMAN AND ENGLISH NAVAL POSITIONS

est points—and their armament was also of a lighter type, for their four largest guns were capable of firing 10-inch shells.

Germany was becoming a naval rival worthy of notice, and the insular position of England came to be a matter of serious concern by 1906. Britain has never considered the building of land forts for her protection—her strength has always been concentrated in floating war machines. She now began to build veritable floating forts, ships of 16,350 tons displacement. By the end of 1906 she had ready to give battle eight ships of this class, the *King Edward VII, Commonwealth, Dominion, Hindustan, Africa, Hibernia, Zealandia,* and *Britannia.* Speed was not sacrificed to weight, for they were given a speed of 18.5 knots, developed by engines of 18,000 horsepower. Their thinnest armor measured 6 inches, and their heavy guns were protected with plates 12 inches thick. The 12-inch gun was still the heaviest piece of armament in the British navy, and these eight ships each carried four of that measurement, as well as four 9.2-inch guns, ten 6-inch guns, fourteen rapid-fire guns of 3 inches, two machine guns, and four torpedo tubes.

Now that it was seen that ships of enormous displacement could also be swift, England committed herself to the building of ships of even greater size. In 1907 came the first of the modern dreadnoughts, so-called from the name which was given to the original ship of 17,900 tons displacement. The *Dreadnought* made the marvelous speed (for a ship of that size) of 21 knots, which she was enabled to do with turbine engines of 23,000 horsepower. Her armor measured from 8 to 11 inches in thickness, and her great size enabled her to carry as high as ten 12-inch guns. Her minor batteries were strong in proportion.

Then, as if taking her breath after a stupendous effort, England in the following year built two ships of 16,000 tons displacement, the *Lord Nelson* and the *Agamemnon,* with speed, armor, and armament much lower than those of the *Dreadnought.* But having taken a rest, Britain was again to make a great effort, launching in 1909 the *Temeraire, Superb,* and *Bellerophon,* monsters displacing 18,600 tons. With engines of 23,000 horsepower that could drive them through the seas at 21 knots, ready

to ward off blows with armor from 8 to 11 inches thick, firing at the same time volleys from ten 12-inch guns down to sixteen 4-inch rapid firers.

Naval architecture had now taken a definite turn, the principal feature of which was the tremendous size of the destructive floating machines. England, a leader in this sort of building, in 1910 built the *Vanguard, Collingwood,* and *St. Vincent,* each displacing 19,250 tons. Nor were they lacking in speed, for they made, on an average, 21 knots. The 20,000-ton battleship was then a matter of months only, and it came in the following year, when the *Colossus, Hercules,* and *Neptune* were launched. It was only in the matter of displacement that these three ships showed any difference from those of the *Vanguard* class; there were no great innovations either in armament or armor. But in the same year, 1911, there were launched the *Thunderer, Monarch, Orion,* and *Conqueror,* each of 22,500 tons, and equipped with armor from 8 to 12 inches thick, for the days of 3-inch armor on first-class warships had gone forever. These had a speed of 21 knots, and were the first British ships to have anything greater than a 12-inch gun. They carried as a primary battery ten 13.5-inch guns, and sixteen 4-inch guns, along with six more of small caliber as their secondary battery.

In 1912 and 1913 there was only one type of warship launched having 23,000 tons displacement with 31,000 horsepower, a half a knot faster than previous dreadnoughts, and carrying, like the previous class, ten 13.5-inch guns, along with some of smaller caliber. The ships of this class were the *King George V, Ajax, Audacious,* and *Centurion.*

The year 1914 saw even more terrible machines of death launched. Two types were put into the water, the first that of the *Iron Duke* class, of which the other members were the *Benbow, Emperor of India,* and *Marlborough.* They showed great improvement in every point; their speed was 22.5 knots, their displacement 25,000 tons, and their torpedo tubes five. Like their immediate predecessors, they carried a primary battery of ten 13.5-inch guns, along with the smaller ones, and their armor measured from 8 to 12 inches in thickness. The second

type of the year was that of the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Warspite* class. They surpassed all the warships when they were built. Their speed for their size was the greatest—25 knots. They had the largest displacement among warships—27,500 tons; they had the thickest armor, ranging from 8 to 13.5 inches; they had the most improved form of engines—oil burners, developing 58,000 horsepower; and most marvelous of all was their primary battery, which consisted of eight 15-inch guns. The largest gun yet made had been the 16-inch gun, for use in permanent position in land forts, and, with the German army, for a mobile force. It now was shown that the modern warship could carry a gun as heavy as any on land. There were in the course of construction when the war broke out eight more such monsters, the *Malaya, Valiant,* and *Barham,* sister ships of the *Queen Elizabeth,* and the *Royal Oak, Resolution, Royal Monarch, Ramillies,* and *Renown,* each of 29,000 tons displacement, but having the same armament as the *Queen Elizabeth.* All of these were hastened to completion as soon as war was declared.

At the time of the declaration of war England had, in addition to these greatest ships, a number of supporting ships such as the ten battle cruisers, *Indomitable, Invincible, Indefatigable, Inflexible, Australia, New Zealand, Queen Mary, Princess Royal, Lion,* and the *Tiger.* Their displacements ranged from 17,250 to 28,000 tons, and their speeds from 25 to 30 knots, the last being that of the *Tiger.* Their speed is their greatest feature, for their armament and batteries are much lighter than those of the first-line ships.

Next, there were ready thirty-four high-speed cruisers of quite light armament and armor. There were six of the *Cressy* type, four of the *Drake* type, nine of the same type as the *Kent,* six of the same class as the *Antrim,* six like the *Black Prince,* three of the same class as the *Shannon,* together with seventeen heavily protected cruisers, of which the *Edgar* was the prototype. The rest of the British navy needs no detailed consideration. It consisted at the outbreak of the war of 70 protected light cruisers, 134 destroyers, and a number of merchant ships convertible into war vessels, together with submarines and other small ships.

The navy of France stood fourth in the list of those of the world powers at the time the war started. There were eighteen old vessels, built between 1894 and 1909, including the *Carnot* class (corresponding to the British ship *Magnificent*), the *Charlemagne, Bouvet, Suffren, République,* and *Democratie* classes. The most modern of these types displaced no more than 14,000 tons, made no more than 18 knots, and carried primary batteries of 12-inch guns.

Some improvement was made in the six ships of the *Danton* class which were built in 1911 and 1912. They displaced 18,000 tons, had armor from 9 to 12 inches thick and carried guns of 12-inch caliber. They correspond to the British ship *Temeraire.* In 1913 and 1914 were launched the *Jean Bart, Courbet, Paris,* and *France* of the dreadnought type, but much slower and not so heavily armed as the British ships of the same class. In eight ships which were incomplete when war was declared the matter of speed received greater attention, and they are consequently faster than the older vessels of the same type. It is in the nineteen French armored cruisers—France has no battle cruisers—that the French showed better efforts as builders of speedy ships, for they made 23 knots or more. In the list of French fighting ships there are in addition two protected cruisers, the *D'Entrecasteaux* and the *Guichen,* together with ten light cruisers. But the French "mosquito fleet," consisting of destroyers, torpedo boats and submarines, is comparatively large. Of these she had 84, 135, and 78, respectively.

After the Russo-Japanese War the battle fleets of Russia were entirely dissipated, so that when the present conflict came she had no ships which might have been accounted worthy aids to the navies of England and France. In so far as is known, her heaviest ships were the *Andrei Pervozvannyi* and the *Imperator Pavel I,* each displacing only 17,200 tons, and of the design of 1911.

Against these fighting naval forces of the allied powers were ranged the navies of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The former had, at the outbreak of hostilities, 36 battleships, 5 battle cruisers, 9 armored cruisers, and 43 cruisers. Instead of giving

attention to torpedo boats she gave it to destroyers, of which she had 130. And of submarines she had 27.

In detail her naval forces consisted, first, of the *Kaiser Friedrich III, Kaiser Karl der Grosse, Kaiser Barbarossa, Kaiser Wilhelm II,* and *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse,* all built as a result of the first agitation of Von Tirpitz, between the years 1898 and 1901. They each displaced 10,614 tons, had a speed of 18 knots, required 13,000 horsepower, were protected with from 10 to 12 inches of armor, and carried four 9.4-inch guns, fourteen of 5.9 inches, twelve of 3.4-inches, and twenty of smaller measurement. Roughly they corresponded to the British ships of the *Canopus* class, both in design and time of launching.

Following this class came that of the *Wittelsbach,* including also the *Wettin, Zähringen, Mecklenburg,* and *Schwaben,* built between 1901 and 1903, displacing 11,643 tons, making 18 knots, protected with from 9 to 10 inches of armor and carrying a primary battery of four 9.4-inch guns, eighteen 5.9-inch guns, and a large secondary battery. The similar type in the British navy was the *Canopus*—for England was far ahead of Germany, both in the matter of displacement and primary battery. During the same years England had launched ships of the type of the *Implacable.*

In 1904 came the German ships *Hessen, Elsass,* and *Braunschweig,* and in 1905 and 1906 the *Preussen* and *Lothringen.* They were well behind the English ships of the same years, for they displaced only 12,097 tons, made 18 knots, carried armor of from 9 to 10 inches in thickness, and a primary battery of four 11-inch guns, fourteen 6.7-inch guns, and twelve 3.4-inch guns, together with rapid firers and other guns in a secondary battery. England at this time was putting 12-inch guns in the primary battery of such ships as the *King Edward VII.*

Still Germany kept up the race, and in 1906, 1907, and 1908 launched the *Hannover, Deutschland, Schlesien, Schleswig-Holstein,* and *Pommern,* with 12,997 tons displacement, 16,000 horsepower, a speed of 18 knots, and only 11-inch guns in the primary batteries. Whereas England, at the same time, was building ships of the dreadnought type.

Next came four ships of the *Vanguard* class—the *Westfälen, Nassau, Rheinland,* and *Posen,* built in 1909 and 1910. Their heaviest guns measured 11 inches, while those of the English ships of the same class measured 12 inches. The displacement of these German fighting ships was 18,600 tons. In point of speed they showed some improvement over the older German ships, making 19.5 knots. Germany, like England, was now committed to the building of larger and larger ships of the line. The *Helgoland, Thüringen, Oldenburg,* and *Ostfriesland,* which were put into the water in 1911 and 1912, were consequently of 22,400 tons displacement, with a speed of 20.5 knots and carrying twelve 12-inch guns, fourteen 5.9-inch rapid-fire guns, fourteen 3.9-inch rapid-fire guns, a few smaller guns, and as many as six torpedo tubes.

While England was maintaining her "two to three" policy, and while the United States stood committed to the building of two first-class battleships a year, Germany, in 1913, put five of them into the water. These were the *König Albert, Prinz Regent Luitpold, Kaiserin, Kaiser,* and *Friedrich der Grosse,* each capable of speeding through the water at a rate of 21 knots, displacing 23,310 tons and carrying an armament of ten 12-inch guns, fourteen 5.9-inch guns, and a large number of rapid-fire guns of smaller measurement. Their armor was quite heavy, being 13 inches thick on the side and 11 inches thick where protection for the big guns was needed.

The largest ships in the German navy which were launched, fitted, and manned at the time that the war began, were those which were built in 1914 and which had a displacement of 26,575 tons. These ships were the *König, Grosser Kurfürst,* and the *Markgraf.* The corresponding type in the British navy was that of the *Iron Duke,* built in the same year. The British ships of this class were 1,000 tons lighter in displacement, a bit faster—making 22.5 knots to the 22 knots made by the German ships—and their armament was not so strong as that of the German type, for the German ships carried ten 14-inch guns, whereas the English carried ten 13.5-inch guns.

In addition to these first-class battleships, Germany had cer-

tain others, individual in type, such as the *Von der Tann, Moltke, Goeben, Seydlitz, Derfflinger, Fürst Bismarck, Prinz Heinrich, Prinz Adalbert, Roon* and *Yorck, Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau, Blücher, Magdeburg, Strassburg, Breslau, Stralsund, Rostock,* and *Karlsruhe.* These may be reckoned as scout cruisers, for they showed much speed, the fastest making 30 knots and the slowest 19 knots. The oldest dates from 1900, and the newest from 1914. Germany had, also, thirty-nine more fast protected cruisers which were designed for scout duty.

In destroyers she was well equipped, having 143 ready for service when war was declared. Her twenty-seven submarines were of the most improved type, and much about their construction and armament she was able to keep secret from the rest of the world. It is probable that even their number was greater than the intelligence departments of foreign navies suspected. The best type had a speed on the surface of 18 knots and could travel at 12 knots when submerged. The type known as *E-21,* of the design of 1914, measured 213 feet 8 inches in length and had a beam of 20 feet.

Austria, though not renowned for her naval strength, had certain units which brought up the power of the Teutonic powers considerably. She had nine first-class battleships, the *Erzherzog Karl, Erzherzog Ferdinand Max, Erzherzog Friedrich, Zrinyi, Radetzky, Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand, Teggethoff, Prinz Eugen,* and *Viribus Unitis.* These, at the time Austria went to war, ranged in age from nine years to one year, and varied in displacement from 10,000 tons to 20,000 tons. The largest guns carried by any of them measured 12 inches, and the fastest, the *Prinz Eugen,* made 20 knots. Of secondary importance were the battleships *Kaiserin Maria Theresia, Kaiser Karl VI,* and *St. Georg.* The register of battleships was supplemented with ten light cruisers of exceptionally light displacement, the highest being only 3,966 tons. Scouting was their chief function. Austria had, also, 18 destroyers, 63 torpedo boats, and 6 submarines.

Such were the respective strengths of the opponents on that day in July, 1914, when the Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary

lost his life. For ten years the officers of the navy created by the German Admiral von Tirpitz had at all dinners come to their feet, waved their wine glasses and had given the famous toast "Der Tag"—to the day on which the English and German naval hosts would sally forth to do battle with each other. "Der Tag" found both forces quite ready, though the British naval authorities stole a march on their German rivals in the matter of mobilization.

It had been the custom for years in the British navy to assemble the greater part of the British ships during the summer at the port of Spithead, where, decorated with bunting, with flags flying, with visitors in holiday spirit, and with officers and men in smart dress, the vessels were reviewed by the king on the royal yacht.

But in the eventful year of 1914, perhaps by accident, perhaps by design, for the truth may never be known, the review had a different aspect. There was no gaiety. The number of ships assembled this time was greater than ever before—216 actual fighting ships passed slowly before the royal yacht—there were no flags, no bunting, no holiday crowds, no smart dress for officers and men. Instead, the fleet was drawn up ready for battle, with decks cleared, guns uncovered, steam up, and magazines replenished. During the tense weeks in which the war clouds gathered over southern Europe this great fighting force remained in the British home waters, and when, at fifteen minutes after midnight on August 4, "Der Tag" had come, this fleet sailed under sealed orders. And throughout the seven seas there were sundry ships flying the Union Jack which immediately received orders by cable and by wireless.

Of the disposition of the naval forces of Germany less was known. Her greatest strength was concentrated in the North Sea, where the island of Helgoland, the Gibraltar of the north, and the Kiel Canal with its exits to the Baltic and North Seas, furnished excellently both as naval bases and impenetrable protection. Throughout the rest of the watery surface of the globe were eleven German warships, to which automatically fell the task of protecting the thousands of ships which, flying the Ger-

man red, white, and black, were carrying freight and passengers from port to port.

The first naval movements in the Great War occurred on the morning of August 5, 1914. The British ship *Drake* cut two cables off the Azores which connected Germany with North and South America, thus leaving these eleven German fighting ships without communication with the German admiralty direct. And the war was not a day old between England and Germany before the German ship *Königin Luise* was caught sowing mines off the eastern English ports by the British destroyer *Lance.*

CHAPTER XXXIII

FIRST BLOOD—BATTLE OF THE BIGHT

THE Germans had taken heed of the value of mines from lessons learned at the cost of Russia in the war with Japan, and set about distributing these engines of destruction throughout the North Sea. The British admiralty knowing this, sent out a fleet of destroyers to scour home waters in search of German mine layers.

About ten o'clock on the morning of August 5, 1914, Captain Fox, on board the *Amphion,* came up with a fishing boat which reported that it had seen a boat "throwing things overboard" along the east coast. A flotilla, consisting of the *Lance, Laurel, Lark* and *Linnet,* set out in search of the stranger and soon found her. She was the *Königin Luise,* and the things she was casting overboard were mines. The *Lance* fired a shot across her bow to stop her, but she put on extra speed and made an attempt to escape. A chase followed; the gunners on the British ship now fired to hit. The first of these shots carried away the bridge of the German ship, a second shot missed, and a third and fourth hit her hull. Six minutes after the firing of the first shot her stern was shot away, and she went to the bottom, bow up. Fifty of her 130 men were picked up and brought to the English shore.

The first naval blood of the Great War had been drawn by Britain on August 5, 1914. The *Königin Luise's* efforts had not been in vain. She had posthumous revenge on the morning of August 6, when the *Amphion,* flagship of the third flotilla of destroyers, hit one of the mines which the German ship had sowed. It was seen immediately by her officers that she must sink; three minutes after her crew had left her there came a second explosion, which, throwing débris aloft, brought about the death of many of the British sailors in the small boats, as well as that of a German prisoner from the *Königin Luise.*

All the world, with possibly the exception of the men in the German admiralty, now looked for a great decisive battle "between the giants" in the North Sea. The British spoke of it as a coming second Trafalgar, but it was not to take place. For reasons of their own the Germans kept their larger and heavier ships within the protection of Helgoland and the Kiel Canal, but their ships of smaller type immediately became active and left German shores to do what damage they might to the British navy. It was hoped, perhaps, that the naval forces of the two powers could be equalized and a battle fought on even terms after the Germans had cut down British advantage by a policy of attrition.

A flotilla of German submarines on August 9 attacked a cruiser belonging to the main British fleet, but was unable to inflict any damage. The lord mayor of the city of Birmingham received the following telegram the next morning: "Birmingham will be proud to learn that the first German submarine destroyed in the war was sunk by H. M. S. *Birmingham.*" Two shots from the British ship had struck the German *U-15,* and she sank immediately.

The German admiralty, even before England had declared war, suspected that the greatest use for the German navy in the months to come would be to fight the British navy, but they ventured to show their naval strength against Russia beforehand. Early in August they sent the *Augsburg* into the Baltic Sea to bombard the Russian port of Libau, but after doing a good bit of damage the German ship retired. It is probable that this raid

was nothing more than a feint to remind Russia that she continually faced the danger of invasion from German troops landed on the Baltic shores under the cover of German ships, and that she must consequently keep a large force on her northern shores instead of sending it west to meet the German army on the border.

Among the German ships which were separated from the main fleet in the North Sea, and which were left without direct communication with the German admiralty after the cutting of the cables off the Azores by the *Drake,* were the cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau.* When England declared war these two German ships were off the coast of Algeria. Both were very fast vessels, having a speed of 28 knots, and they were designed to go 6,000 knots without needing replenishment of their coal bunkers.

On the morning of August 5, after having bombarded some of the coast cities of Algeria they found themselves cut off on the east by a French fleet and on the west by an English fleet, but by a very clever bit of stratagem they escaped. The band of the *Goeben* was placed on a raft and ordered on a given moment to play the German national airs after an appreciable period. Meanwhile, under the cover of the night's darkness the two German ships steamed away. After they had a good start the band on the raft began to play. The British patrols heard the airs and immediately all British ships were searching for the source of the music. To find a small raft in mid-sea was an impossible task, and while the enemy was engaged in it the two Germans headed for Messina, then a neutral port, which they reached successfully. The Italian authorities permitted them to remain there only twenty-four hours.

Before leaving they took a dramatic farewell, which received publicity in the press of the whole world, and which was designed to lead the British fleet commanders to believe that the Germans were coming out to do battle. Instead, they headed for Constantinople. They escaped all the ships of the British Mediterranean fleet with the exception of the cruiser *Gloucester.* With this ship they exchanged shots and were in turn slightly damaged, but they reached the Porte in seaworthy condition, and

were immediately sold to the Turkish Government, which was then still neutral. The crews were sent to Germany and were warmly welcomed at Berlin. The officers responsible for their escape were disciplined by the British authorities.

Both Germany and England, the former by means of the eleven ships at large, and the latter by means of her preponderance in the number of ships, now made great efforts to capture trading ships of the enemy. When England declared war there was issued a royal proclamation which stated that up to midnight of August 14 England would permit German merchantmen in British harbors to sail for home ports, provided Germany gave British merchantmen the same privilege, but it was specified that ships of over 5,000 tons would not receive the privilege because they could be converted into fighting ships afterward. But on the high seas enemy ships come upon were captured.

The German admiralty on August 1 had issued orders to German merchantmen to keep within neutral ports, and by this means such important ships as the *Friedrich der Grosse* and the *Grosser Kurfürst* eluded capture. In the harbor of New York was the *Kronprinzessin Cecilie,* a fast steamer of 23.5 knots. She left New York on July 28 carrying a cargo of $10,000,000 in gold, and was on the high seas when England declared war. Naturally she was regarded by the British as a great prize, and the whole world awaited from day to day the news of her capture, but her captain, showing great resourcefulness, after nearly reaching the British Isles, turned her prow westward, darkened all exterior lights, put canvas over the port holes and succeeded in reaching Bar Harbor, Me., on the morning of August 5.

Similarly the *Lusitania* and the French liner *Lorraine,* leaving New York on August 5, were able to elude the German cruiser *Dresden,* which was performing the difficult task of trying to intercept merchantmen belonging to the Allies as they sailed from America, while she was keeping watch against warships flying the enemies' flags. Still more important was the sailing from New York of the German liner *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse.* This ship had a speed of 22.5 knots and a displacement of 14,349 tons. During the first week of the war she cleared the port of

New York with what was believed to be a trade cargo, but she so soon afterward began harassing British trading ships that it was believed that she left port equipped as a vessel of war or fitted out as one in some other neutral port. The continued story of the German raids on allied trading ships must form a separate part of this narrative. It was only a month after the outbreak of hostilities that the fleets of the allied powers had swept clean the seven seas of all ships flying German and Austrian flags which were engaged in trade and not in warlike pursuits.

The first naval battle of the Great War was fought on August 28, 1914. "A certain liveliness in the North Sea" was reported through the press by the British admiralty on the 19th of August. Many of the smaller vessels of the fleet of Admiral von Ingenohl, the German commander, such as destroyers, light cruisers, and scouting cruisers, were sighted. Shots between these and English vessels of the same types were exchanged at long range, but a pitched battle did not come for still a week. Meanwhile the British navy had been doing its best to destroy the mine fields established by the Germans. Trawlers were sent out in pairs, dragging between them large cables which cut the mines from the sea-bottom moorings. On being loosened they came to the surface and were destroyed by shots from the trawlers' decks.

On the 28th of August came the battle off the Bight of Helgoland. The island of Helgoland had been a British possession from 1807 till 1890, when it was transferred to Germany by treaty. It was seen immediately by the Germans that it formed an excellent natural naval base, lying as it does, thirty-five miles northwest of Cuxhaven and forty-three miles north of Wilhelmshaven. They at once began to augment the natural protection it afforded with their own devices. Two Zeppelin sheds were erected, concrete forts were built and 12-inch guns were installed. The scene of the battle which took place here was the Bight of Helgoland, which formed a channel eighteen miles wide some seven miles north of the island and near which lay the line of travel for ships leaving the ports of the Elbe.

British submarines which had been doing reconnaissance work

on the German coast since August 24 reported to the British commander, Admiral Jellicoe, that a large force of German light cruisers and smaller craft were lying under the protection of the Helgoland guns, and he immediately arranged plans for leading this force away from that protection in order to give it battle. Briefly the plans made provided that three submarines were to proceed on the surface of the water to within sight of the German ships and when chased by the latter were to head westward. The light cruisers *Arethusa* and *Fearless* were detailed to run in behind any light German craft which were to follow the British submarines, endeavoring to cut them off from the German coast, and these two vessels were backed by a squadron of light cruisers held in readiness should the first two need assistance. Squadrons of cruisers and battle cruisers were detailed to stay in the rear, still further to the northwest, to engage any German ships of their own class which might get that far.

It was at midnight on August 26 that Commodore Keyes moved toward Helgoland with eight submarines accompanied by two destroyers. During the next day—August 27—this force did nothing more than keep watch for German submarines and scouting craft, and then took up its allotted position for the main action. The morning of the 28th broke misty and calm. Under half steam three of the British submarines, the *E-6*, *E-7*, and *E-8* steamed toward the island fortress, showing their hulls above water and followed by the two detailed destroyers.

The mist thickened. Still more slowly and cautiously went the British submersibles, and while they went above water, five of their sister craft traveled under the surface. Here was the bait for the German ships under Helgoland's guns. Would they bite?

The Germans soon gave the answer. First there crept out a German destroyer which took a good look at the situation and then gave wireless signals to some twenty more of her type, which soon came out to join her. The twenty-one little and speedy German boats bravely came out and chased the two British destroyers and three submarines, while a German seaplane slowly circled upward to see if the surrounding regions harbored enemies. Presumably the airman found what he

sought for he soon flew back to report to Helgoland. The peaceful aspect of the waters to the east of the island immediately changed, as a squadron of light cruisers weighed anchor and put out after the retiring Britishers.

Before a description of the fighting can be given it is necessary to understand the plan of the fight as a whole. Assuming that the page on which these words are printed represents a map of the North Sea and that the points of the compass are as they would be on an ordinary chart, we have the island of Helgoland, half an inch long and a quarter of an inch wide, situated in the lower right-hand corner of this page, with about half an inch separating its eastern side from the right edge of the page and the same distance separating it from the bottom. The lower edge of the page may represent the adjoining coasts of Germany and Holland, and the right-hand edge may represent the coast of the German province of Schleswig and the coast of Denmark.

At seven o'clock on the morning of August 28 the positions of the fighting forces were as follows: The decoy British submarines were making a track from Helgoland to the northwest, pursued by a flotilla of German submarines, destroyers, and torpedo boats, and a fleet of light cruisers. On the west—the left edge of the page, halfway up—there were the British cruisers *Arethusa* and *Fearless* accompanied by flotillas, and steaming eastward at a rate that brought them to the rear of the German squadron of light cruisers, thus cutting off the latter from the fortress. In the southwest—the lower left-hand corner of the page—there was stationed a squadron of British cruisers, ready to close in when needed; in the northwest—the upper left-hand corner of the page—there were stationed a squadron of British light cruisers and another of battle cruisers, and it was toward these last two units that the decoys were leading the German fleets.

The *Arethusa* and *Fearless* felt the first shock of battle, on the side of the British. The German cruiser *Ariadne* closed with the former, while the latter soon found itself very busy with the German cruiser *Strassburg*. For thirty-five minutes—before the *Fearless* drew the fire of the *Strassburg*—the two German vessels poured a telling fire into the *Arethusa*, and the latter was soon in

bad condition, but she managed to hold out till succored by the *Fearless,* and then planted a shell against the *Ariadne* which carried away her forebridge and killed her captain. The scouting which had been done by the smaller craft of the German fleets showed their commanders that there were other British ships in the neighborhood besides the two they had first engaged, and it was thought wiser to withdraw in face of possible reenforcement of the British, consequently the *Strassburg* and *Ariadne* turned eastward to seek the protection of the fortress. The *Arethusa,* a boat that had been in commission but a week when the battle was fought, was in a bad way; all but one of her guns were out of action, her water tank had been punctured and fire was raging on her main deck amidships. The *Fearless* passed her a cable at nine o'clock and towed her westward, away from the scene of action, while her crew made what repairs they could.

The flotillas of both sides had meanwhile been busy. At the head of the squadron of German destroyers that came out of the waters behind Helgoland was the *V-187.* Without slacking speed she steamed straight for the British destroyers, her small guns spitting rapidly, but she was outnumbered by British destroyers, which poured such an amount of steel into her thin sides that she went under, her guns firing till their muzzles touched the water and her crew cheering as they went to their deaths. A few managed to keep afloat on wreckage, and during a lull in the fighting, which lasted from nine o'clock till ten, boats were lowered from the British destroyers *Goshawk* and *Defender* to pick up these stranded German sailors.

The commanders of the German fleet, perceiving these small boats from afar, thought that the British were resorting to the old principle of boarding, and the German light cruiser *Mainz* came out to fire upon them. Two of the British small boats had to be abandoned as their mother ships made off before the oncoming German. They were in a perilous position, right beneath the guns of the fortress. But now a daring and unique rescue took place. The commander of the British submarine *E-4* had been watching the fighting through the periscope of his craft, and seeing the helpless position of the two small boats, he sub-

merged, made toward them, and then, to the great surprise of the men in them, came up right between them and took their occupants aboard his boat.

Repairs had been made on the *Arethusa* which enabled her to go into action again by ten o'clock. Accompanied again by two light cruisers of ten four-inch guns and the *Fearless,* she turned westward in answer to calls for assistance from the destroyers *Lurcher* and *Firedrake,* which accompanied the submarines and which reported that they were being chased by fast German cruisers. Suddenly the light cruiser *Strassburg* again came out of the mist and bore down on the British cruisers. Her larger guns were too heavy and had too long a range for those of the British craft, and the latter immediately sent out calls which brought into action for the first time certain ships belonging to the squadron of British light cruisers, which had been stationed to the northwest—the upper left-hand corner of the page.

The vessels which answered the calls were the light cruisers *Falmouth* and *Nottingham* with eight eight-inch and nine six-inch guns respectively, but before arriving the *Strassburg* still had time to inflict more damage on the *Arethusa.* The cruisers *Köln* and *Mainz* joined the *Strassburg,* and the British vessels were having a bad time of it when their commander ordered the *Fearless* to concentrate all fire on the *Strassburg.* This, and a concentrated fire from the destroyers, proved too strong for her and she turned eastward, disappearing in the mist off Helgoland. The *Mainz* then received the attention of all available British guns, including the battle cruiser *Lion,* and soon fire broke out within her hold. Next her foremast, slowly tottering and then inclining more and more, crashed down upon her deck, a distorted mass. Following that came down one of her funnels. The fire which was raging aboard her was hampering her machinery, and her speed slackened; the moment to strike with a torpedo had come, and one of these "steel fishes" was sent against her hull below water. In the explosion which followed one of her boilers came out through her deck, ascended some fifty feet and dropped down near her bow; her engines stopped, and she began to settle slowly, her bow going down first.

It was now noon. From behind the veil of the surrounding mist came the *Falmouth* and *Nottingham,* which with the guns in their turrets completely finished the hapless *Mainz,* and their sailors openly admired the bravery of her crew, which, while she sank, maintained perfect order and sang the German national air.

There was yet the *Köln* with which the *Arethusa* had to do battle. But by now the heavy British battle cruisers *Lion* and *Queen Mary* had also come down from the northwest to take part in the fighting, and letting the *Arethusa* escape from the range of the light cruiser *Köln,* they went for the German, which, overpowered, fled toward Helgoland. While the chase was on the *Ariadne* again made her appearance and came to the aid of the *Köln,* but the light cruiser *Ariadne* carried no gun as effective in destructive power as the 13.5-inch guns of the *Lion,* and she, too, had to seek safety in flight. The British ships then finished the *Köln;* so badly was she hit that when the British small boats sought the spot where she quickly sank they found not a man of her crew afloat. Every man of the 370 of her crew perished.

The afternoon came, and with its advent the mist, which had kept the guns of Helgoland's forts out of action, had cleared off the calm waters of the North Sea. By the time the sun had set only floating wreckage gave evidence that here brave men had fought and died. By evening the respective forces were in their home ports, being treated for their hurts. The Germans had lost the *Mainz, Köln,* and *Ariadne,* and the *Strassburg* had limped home. The loss in destroyers and other small craft in addition to that of the *V-187* was not known. The loss on the British side had not entailed that of a large ship, but the *Arethusa* when she returned to her home port was far from being in good condition, and some of the smaller boats were in the same circumstances.

Admiral von Ingenohl was committed more strongly than ever, as a result of this engagement, to the belief that the best policy for his command would be to keep his squadrons within the protection afforded by Helgoland and that the most damage could be done to the enemy by picking off her larger ships one by one. In other words, he again turned to the policy of attrition. He immediately put it into force.

On the 3d of September the British gunboat *Speedy* struck a mine in the North Sea and went down. It was only two days later that the light cruiser *Pathfinder* was made the true target of a torpedo fired by a German submarine off the British eastern coast, and she, too, went to the bottom. But the British immediately retaliated, for the submarine *E-9* sighted the German light cruiser *Hela* weathering a bad storm on September 13 between Helgoland and the Frisian coast. A torpedo was launched and found its mark, and the *Hela* joined the *Köln* and *Mainz*. Up to this point the results of attrition were even, but the Germans scored heavily during the following week.

On September 22 the three slow British cruisers *Cressy, Hogue,* and *Aboukir* were patrolling the waters off the Dutch coast, unaccompanied by small craft of any kind, when suddenly, at half past six in the morning, the *Aboukir* crumpled and sank, the victim of another submarine attack. But the commander of the *Hogue* thought she had been sunk by hitting a mine, and innocently approached the spot of the disaster to rescue such of the crew of the *Aboukir* as were afloat. The work of mercy was never completed, for the *Hogue* itself was hit by two torpedoes in the next few moments, and she joined her sister ship. The commander of the *Cressy,* failing to take a lesson from what he had witnessed, now approached, and his ship was also hit by two torpedoes, making the third victim of the German policy of attrition within an hour, and Captain Lieutenant von Weddigen, commander of the *U-9,* which had done this work, immediately became a German hero.

CHAPTER XXXIV

BATTLES ON THREE SEAS

SO stood the score in the naval warfare in the North Sea at the end of the second month of the Great War. But while these events were taking place in the waters of Europe, others of equal import had been taking place in the waters of Asia. On August 23, 1914, Japan declared war on Germany and immediately set about scouring the East for German craft of all kinds.

Japan brought to the naval strength of the Allied powers no mean unit. Hers was the only navy in the world which had seen the ultramodern battleships in action; the Russian navy which had had the same experience was no more. Eight of her first-class battleships were, at the time of her entrance into the Great War, veterans of the war with Russia. The *Fugi, Asahi, Kikasa,* and *Shikishima* had gone into the former war as Japanese ships, and the remaining four had gone into it as Russian ships, but had been captured by the Japanese. These were the *Hizen, Sagami, Suwo,* and *Iwami.* Their value was not great, for the *Fugi* had been launched as far back as 1896. Nevertheless she carried 12-inch guns and displaced 12,300 tons. But her speed was only 17 knots at the most. She had been built in England as had the *Asahi* and *Shikishima,* which were launched in 1900 and 1901. They also carried 12-inch guns and had a speed of 18.5 knots. Their tonnage was 15,000. Admiral Togo's former flagship, the *Mikasa,* was also of the predreadnought type, having been built in 1900, and carrying a main battery of 12-inch guns. Her speed was 18.5 knots.

Of the former Russian ships the rechristened *Iwami* was of French build, protected with Krupp steel armor to the thickness of 7.5 inches. Her displacement was 13,600 tons, and her speed 18 knots. Like the other ships of this class in the Japanese navy, she carried a main battery of 12-inch guns. The *Hizen* was an American product, having been built by Cramps in 1902. Her displacement was 12,700 tons, made a speed of 18.5 knots, was

also protected with Krupp steel and carried four 10-inch guns. She was a real veteran, for she had undergone repairs necessitated by having been torpedoed off Port Arthur and had been refloated after being sunk in later action there. The *Sagami* and the *Suwo* had been built in 1901 and 1902. They displaced 13,500 tons, had a speed of 18.5 knots, and carried as their heaviest armament 10-inch guns.

In addition to these eight ships Japan had also nine protected cruisers, all of the same type and all veterans of the war with Russia. They were of such strength and endurance that the Japanese admiralty rated them capable of taking places in the first line of battle. These were the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga,* purchased from Italy and built in 1904, displacing 7,700 tons, and making a speed of 22 knots; the *Aso,* French built and captured from the Russians, and of the same design and measurements as the other two; and the protected cruisers *Yakumo, Asama, Idzumo, Tokiwa, Aguma,* and *Iwate,* built before the war with Russia, slightly heavier than their sister ships but not as fast. None of this type has been added to the Japanese navy since 1907. Japan has, instead, given attention to scouting cruisers, with the result that she possessed three excellent vessels of this class, the *Yahagi, Chikuma,* and *Hirato,* with the good speed of 26 knots and displacing 5,000 tons. They were built in 1912. And not so efficient were the other ships of similar design, the *Soya,* built in America, *Tone* and *Tsugaru.*

The veteran Japanese navy was supplemented with 52 destroyers and 15 submarines, all built since the war with Russia, and a number of heavier vessels. Among the latter were the first-class battleships *Kashima* and *Katori,* completed in 1906, and displacing 16,400 tons. Their heavy guns measured 12 inches, and they made a speed of 19.5 knots. There were also the vessels *Ikoma* and *Tsukuba,* individual in type, with corresponding kinds in no other navy, and which might be called a cross between an armored cruiser and battle cruiser. Though displacing no more than 13,766 tons, they carried four 12-inch guns, and made the comparatively low speed of 20.5 knots. In 1909 and 1910 the Japanese added two more ships of this kind

to their navy, the *Ibuki* and *Kurama*, slightly heavier and faster and with the same armament.

The dreadnought *Satsuma* also came in 1910—a vessel displacing 19,400 tons, but making a speed of only 18.2 knots, and with an extraordinarily heavy main battery consisting of four 12-inch guns and twelve 10-inch guns. The *Aki*, launched in 1911, was 400 tons heavier than the *Satsuma*, and was more than 2 knots faster, and her main battery was equally strong. The dreadnoughts *Settsu* and *Kawachi*, completed in 1913 and 1912 respectively, displaced 21,420 tons, but were able to make not more than 20 knots. At this time the Japanese admiralty, perhaps on account of lessons learned in the war with Russia, was building dreadnoughts with less speed than those in the other navies, but with much heavier main batteries. These two vessels carried a unique main battery of twelve 12-inch guns, along with others of smaller measurement. What the dreadnoughts lacked in speed was made up in that of four battle cruisers launched after 1912. These were the *Kirishima*, *Kongo*, *Hi-Yei*, and *Haruna*, with the good speed of 28 knots. Their displacement was 27,500 tons, and they carried in their primary batteries eight 14-inch guns and sixteen 6-inch guns.

At the time Japan entered the war she had in building four superdreadnoughts with the tremendous displacement of 30,600 tons. These vessels, the *Mitsubishi*, *Yukosaka*, *Kure*, and *Kawasaki*, had been designed to carry a main battery of the strength of the U. S. S. *Pennsylvania*, and to have a speed of 22.5 knots.

The first move of the Japanese navy in the Great War was to cooperate with the army in besieging the German town of Kiaochaw on the Shantung Peninsula in China, but the operation was soon more military than naval. Japanese warships captured Bonham Island in the group known as the Marshall Islands, and, having cleared eastern waters of German warships, scoured the Pacific in such a manner as to chase those which escaped into the regions patrolled by the British navy.

The German vessels which made their escape were among the eleven which were separated from the rest of Germany's navy in the North Sea at the outbreak of hostilities. They were, with

the exception of the *Dresden,* the *Leipzig, Nürnberg, Scharnhorst,* and *Gneisenau.* It was weeks before they were first reported—on September 22 at the harbor of Papeete, where they destroyed the French gunboat *Zelie,* and after putting again to sea their location was once more a mystery.

On the evening of November 1 a British squadron consisting of the vessels *Good Hope, Otranto, Glasgow,* and *Monmouth,* all except the *Good Hope* coming through the straits, sighted the enemy. The British ships lined up abreast and proceeded in a northeasterly direction. The Germans took up the same alignment eight miles to the westward of the British ships and proceeded southward at full speed. Both forces opened fire at a distance of 12,000 yards shortly after six o'clock off Coronel near the coast of Chile. The *Gneisenau* was struck by a 9.2-inch shot from the *Good Hope.* The *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* picked the *Good Hope* as their first target, but finding that they could do no damage at that range and that they were safe from the fire of the British ship, they came to within 6,000 yards of her. Her fire in reply was augmented by that of the *Monmouth.* Excellent aim on the part of the Germans soon had the *Good Hope* out of action, and fire broke out aboard her. Soon after general action her magazine exploded.

The *Monmouth* then received the brunt of the fire from the German ships, and came in for more than her share of the destructive fire, being put virtually out of action, and at the same time there occurred an explosion on board the *Good Hope* and she sank immediately, carrying Admiral Cradock to his death.

There remained of the British force only the *Otranto*—a converted liner and not really a battleship of the line—the *Glasgow* and the hopelessly disabled *Monmouth* to continue the fight with an efficient German force. The British commander ordered the former two to get away by making speed, but the officer in charge of the *Glasgow,* paying no heed to the order, kept in the fight.

Dusk was then coming on and the *Glasgow* sought to take advantage of it by getting between the German ships and the limping *Monmouth,* concealing the latter from them with her smoke. But the Germans had now come to within 4,500 yards.

To escape possible attack from torpedoes the German ships spread out their line, but perceiving that such a danger was not present, they again closed in to finish the crippled British ships. All of the German ships now went for the *Glasgow*, and she had to desert the *Monmouth*, which first sailed northward, in bad condition, and later made an attempt to run ashore at Santa Maria, but was unable to do so.

The inevitable "if" played its part in the battle. When the British fleet first went after the Germans it had as one of its units the battleship *Canopus*. But her speed was not up to that of the other ships, and she fell far to their stern. By the time the action was on she was too distant to take part in it. No attempt was made to go together owing to the slowness of the battleship. The *Canopus* was never in the action at all, being 150 miles astern. Had Cradock not desired to he need not have taken on the action but retired in the *Canopus*. The setting of the sun also played its part; if daylight had continued some hours more the British squadron might have held out till the *Canopus* brought up, for the almost horizontal rays of the sun were in the eyes of the German gunners. But as it dropped below the watery horizon it left the British ships silhouetted against a clear outline. The *Canopus* did not get into the fight, and the greatest concern of the *Glasgow* as she steamed off was to warn the British battleship to keep off, for of less speed than the German ships, and outnumbered by them, her appearance meant her destruction. The *Glasgow*, later joined by the *Canopus*, arrived in battered condition at the Falkland Islands. The *Monmouth*, after the main action was over, was found and finished by the German squadron and went down. Seventy shots were fired at her when she lay sinking, on fire and helpless, and unable to fire her guns. Germany had evened the score in the second battle between fleets.

The *Dresden* after the Falkland action took refuge in Fiordes of Terra del Fuego and after being there for a couple of months proceeded to the head of the Island of Juan Fernandez where she was found by the *Glasgow*, *Kent* and auxiliary cruiser *Orama* and was destroyed.

Most remarkable had been the career of the German third-class cruiser *Nürnberg*, which had joined the other German ships that went to make up the German squadron which fought in this battle off Coronel. This vessel, on the day after Germany and England went to war, was lying near Yap, an island in the Pacific, that had been, until captured by the Japanese, the wireless station of most importance to the Germans in the Pacific Ocean. She immediately, after being apprised that she was part of a navy engaged in a war, set sail and was not reported again until the 7th of September, when she appeared at Fanning Island, a cable station maintained by Britain, and from which cables run to Vancouver to the east and Australia to the west. Here she performed a clever bit of work by entering the harbor flying the tricolor of France and appearing as though she was making a friendly visit. Officials on the island, happy to think they would have such a visitor, saw two cutters leave the warship.

Great was the surprise of those watching events from the shore when they saw the French flag lowered from the masthead of the visitor and in its place the German naval ensign run up. The cutters were just about reaching knee-deep water at the shore when this surprise came, and it was augmented when, with the protection of the guns of the vessel, the men in these cutters showed themselves to be a hostile landing party.

Her presence was not reported to the rest of the world for the good reason that she cut all cables leading from the island. All the British men there were put under guard, and after damaging all cable instruments she could find, the *Nürnberg*, accompanied by a collier that had come with her, again took to the high seas.

She next turned up at the island of St. Felix, 300 miles west of the Chilean coast, but did not come to the harbor. During the night of October 14 the inhabitants of that island saw the flash and heard the roar of an explosion miles out to sea, and for a number of days later they picked up on their beach the wreckage of what must have been a collier. As has been related in preceding paragraphs, the *Nürnberg* took part in that fight. The end of her career came in the battle off the Falkland Islands, which will be dealt with later.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE GERMAN SEA RAIDERS

WHILE British men-o'-war were capturing German merchantmen and taking them to British ports, the German raiders which were abroad were earning terrifying reputations for themselves because the enemy merchantmen with which they came upon had to be destroyed on the high seas, for there were no ports to which they could be taken. Prominent among these was the *Königsberg*, a third-class cruiser. When the war came she was in Asiatic waters and immediately made the east coast of Africa her "beat." While patrolling it she came upon two British merchant ships, and after taking from their stores such supplies as were needed she sent them to the bottom. On September 20, 1914, she made a dash into the harbor of Zanzibar and found there the British cruiser *Pegasus*, which on account of her age was undergoing a complete overhauling. She was easy prey for the German ship, for besides the fact that she was stationary her guns were of shorter range than those of her adversary. Shell after shell tore into her till she was battered beyond all resemblance to a fighting craft. But her flag flew till the end, for though it was shot down from the masthead, two marines held it aloft, one of them losing his life. And when the *Königsberg*, her task of destruction complete, sailed off, the lone marine still held up the Union Jack. The British ships in those waters made a systematic hunt for her and located her at last, on the 30th of October. She was hiding in her favorite rendezvous, some miles up the Rufigi River in German East Africa. The ship which found her was the *Chatham*, a second-class cruiser, with a draft much heavier than that of the *Königsberg*, and the difference gave the latter a good advantage, for she ran up the river and her enemy could not follow. Nor could the English ship use her guns with much effect, for the gunners could not make out the hull of the German ship through the tropical vegetation along the river banks. All that the British ship could do

was to fire shells in her general direction and then guess what effect they had. But to prevent her escape, colliers were sunk at the mouth of the river. She had come to as inglorious an end as her victim, the *Pegasus*.

The account of another raider, the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*, which left New York on the evening that England declared war, with her bunkers loaded with coal and other supplies for warships, has already been related. The mystery concerning this sailing was cleared up when she was caught coaling the *Karlsruhe* in the Atlantic. Both ships made off in safety that time, and soon after a British cruiser reported that she had been heard in wireless communication with the *Dresden*. Thereafter the fate of this ship remained a mystery till she put in at Hampton Roads on April 11, 1915.

Most spectacular was the career of the *Emden*, a third-class cruiser, which sailed from Japanese waters at the same time as the *Königsberg*. Through the ability of her commander, Captain Karl von Müller, she earned the soubriquet "Terror of the East," for by using a clever system of supply ships she was able to raid eastern waters for ten weeks without making a port or otherwise running the risk of leaving a clue by which British ships might find her. Her favorite occupation was that of stopping enemy merchantmen which she sank. But her captain always allowed one—the last one—of her prizes to remain afloat, and in this he sent to the nearest port the officers, passengers, and crews of those that were destroyed. At times he used prizes as colliers, putting them under command of his petty officers.

By way of diversion, Captain von Müller steamed into the harbor of Madras in the Bay of Bengal and opened with his guns on the suburbs of the town, setting on fire two huge oil tanks there. The fort there returned the fire, but the *Emden* after half an hour sailed away unharmed. She had been enabled to come near the British guns on shore by flying the French flag, which she continued to display until her guns began to boom. She then left the waters of Bengal Bay, but not before she had ended the journey of $30,000,000 worth of exports to India, and

had sent to the bottom of the sea some $15,000,000 worth of imports. Twenty-one steamers had been her victims, their total value having been about $3,250,000, and their cargoes were worth at least $15,000,000. Very expensive the British found her, and they were willing to go to any length to end her career. They curtailed her activities somewhat when the *Yarmouth* captured the converted liner *Markomannia,* which was one of her colliers, and recaptured the Greek freighter *Pontoporos,* which had been doing the same duty. This took place off the coast of Sumatra.

But Von Müller was undaunted, even though his coal problem was becoming serious. He knew that the *Yarmouth* had sailed from Penang near Malacca and that she was not at that base, since she was searching for his own vessel. He therefore conceived the daring exploit of making a visit to Penang while the *Yarmouth* was still away. He came within ten miles of the harbor on the 28th of October, and disguised his ship by erecting a false funnel made of canvas upheld by a wooden frame, much like theatrical scenery. This gave the *Emden* four funnels, such as the *Yarmouth* carried. Coming into the harbor in the twilight of the dawn, she was taken by those on shore to be the British ship, not a hostile gun ready for her.

Lying in the harbor was the Russian cruiser *Jemchug* and three French destroyers and a gunboat. The watch on the Russian ship questioned her, and was told by the wireless operator on the *Emden* that she was the *Yarmouth* returning to anchor. By this ruse the German ship was enabled to come within 600 yards of the Russian ship before the false funnel was discovered. Fire immediately spurted from the Russian guns, but a torpedo from the *Emden* struck the *Jemchug's* engine room and made it impossible for her crew to get ammunition to her guns. Von Müller poured steel into her from a distance of 250 yards with terrible effect. The Russian ship's list put many of her guns out of action, and she was unable to deliver an effective reply. Another torpedo from the *Emden* exploded her magazine. Fifteen minutes after the firing of the first shot the Russian had gone to the bottom.

Von Müller now put the prow of the *Emden* to sea again, for

he feared that both the *Yarmouth* and the French cruiser *Dupleix* had by then been summoned by wireless. Luck was with him. Half an hour after leaving the harbor he sighted a ship flying a red flag, which showed him at once that she was carrying a cargo of powder. He badly needed the ammunition, and he prepared to capture her. But this operation was interrupted by a mirage, which caused the small French destroyer *Mosquet* to appear like a huge battleship. When he discovered the truth, Von Müller closed with the Frenchman, who came to the rescue of the *Glenturret,* the powder ship. Destroyer and cruiser closed for a fight, the former trying to get close enough to make work with torpedoes possible, but the long range of the *Emden's* guns prevented this, and the *Mosquet* was badly damaged by having her engine room hit. Soon she was in a bad way, and Von Müller ordered his guns silenced, thinking the destroyer would now give up the fight. But the Frenchman was valiant and refused to do so; he let go with two torpedoes which did not find their mark, and was immediately subjected to a withering fire, which caused his ship to sink, bow first.

One of the destroyers which had been in the harbor now came out to take issue with the *Emden,* but it was the business of the latter to continue destroying merchant ships and not to run the risk of having her career ended by a warship, so she immediately put off for the Indian Ocean. A storm which then came up permitted her to make a better escape.

It was not until the 9th of November that the world at large heard more of her, and it proved to be the last day of her reign of terror. There was a British wireless and cable station on the Cocos (Keeling) Isles, southwest of Java, and Von Müller had determined to interrupt the communication maintained there connecting India, Australia, and South Africa. Forty men and three officers, with three machine guns, were detailed by him as a landing party to destroy instruments and cut the cables. But such a thing had been partially forestalled by the British authorities, who had set up false cable ends. These were destroyed by the deceived Germans. When the *Emden* had first made her appearance the news had been sent out by the wireless

operator on shore, not knowing what ships would pick up his calls.

This time luck was against Von Müller, for it so happened that a convoy of troop ships from Australia was passing within one hundred miles. They were accompanied by the Australian cruisers *Melbourne* and *Sydney*. The latter was dispatched to go to the Cocos Islands, and by getting up a speed of 26 knots she reached them in less than three hours. Von Müller knew that escape by flight was impossible, for his ship had been weeks at sea; her boilers were crusted, her machinery badly in need of repair, and she had not too much coal. He therefore decided to give battle, and went straight for the *Sydney* at full speed. His object was to meet her on even terms, for her advantage was that her guns had much greater range than those of the *Emden*. If he could get close enough he might be able to use his torpedo tubes. But Captain Glossop of the *Sydney* saw through this maneuver and maintained good distance between the two ships. About the first shot from the *Emden* killed the man at the range finder on the fore bridge of the *Sydney*. Captain Glossop was standing within a few feet of him at the time.

The replies from the Australian ship were fatal. The foremost funnel of the *Emden* crumpled and fell; her fire almost ceased, and then she began to burn; the second funnel and the third fell also; there was nothing left but to beach her, which Von Müller did, just before noon. While she lay there helpless the *Sydney* shot more steel into her, leaving her quite helpless, and then went off to chase a merchant ship which had been sighted during the fighting and which, when caught, proved to be the British ship *Buresk*, now manned by Germans and doing duty as collier to the *Emden*. Returning to the latter, Captain Glossop saw that she still flew the German flag at her masthead. He signaled her, asking whether she would surrender, but receiving no reply after waiting five minutes he let her have a few more salvos. The German flag came down and the white flag went up in its place. The *Jemchug* had been avenged, and the terribly costly career of the *Emden* brought to an end. Von

Müller was taken prisoner, and on account of his valor was permitted to keep his sword. But the landing party, which had cut the false cables, was still at large. The adventures of these three officers and forty men form a separate story, which will be narrated later.

CHAPTER XXXVI

BATTLE OFF THE FALKLANDS

THE defeat of the British squadron back in the first week of November had sorely tried the patience of the British public, and the admiralty felt the necessity of retrieving faith in the navy. Von Spee was still master of the waters near the Horn, and till his ships had again been met the British could not boast of being rulers of the waves. Consequently Admiral Fisher detailed the two battle cruisers *Invincible* and *Inflexible* to go to the Falkland Islands. They left England November 11, 1914, and on the outward journey met with and took along the light cruisers *Carnarvon, Kent,* and *Cornwall,* the second-class cruiser *Bristol,* and the converted liner *Macedonia.* The *Canopus* and the *Glasgow,* now repaired, all joined the squadron, which was commanded by Admiral Sturdee. The vessels coaled at Stanley, Falkland Islands, and while so engaged on December 8 were warned by a civilian volunteer watcher on a near-by hill that two strange vessels had made their appearance in the distance. British naval officers identified them and other vessels which were coming into view as the ships of Von Spee's squadron, the one which had been victorious off Coronel.

During the interval that had elapsed since that engagement these German ships had not been idle. Von Spee knew that the *Glasgow* had gone to the Falklands and that there were important wireless stations there, but he put off going after those prizes and picked up others. The *Nürnberg* had cut communication between Banfield and Fanning Islands. Two British trading ships had fallen victims to the *Dresden,* and four more had

met the same end at the hands of the *Leipzig*. For coal and other supplies Von Spee had been relying on the Chilean ports, but now came trouble between him and the port authorities, for England was accusing the South American nation of acting without regard to neutrality. It was for this reason that Von Spee turned southward to take the Falkland Islands. The world at large, and of course Von Spee, had no knowledge of the ships which had set out from Plymouth for the Falklands on the eleventh of the month, so he approached in full expectation of making not only a raid but for occupation. He knew that he would have to exchange shots with the *Glasgow* and perhaps some small ships, and he believed the islands weakly defended by forts, but there was nothing in that to defer his attack. The result—the lookout near Stanley had reported the oncoming warships *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*, followed by the rest of the German squadron. German guns were trained on the wireless station, and great was the surprise of the unfortunate Von Spee and his officers when there was heard the booming of guns which they knew immediately must be mounted on warships larger than their own. Their scouting had been defective, and the presence of the *Inflexible* and *Invincible* had till then not been discovered. They then reasoned that these were the guns of the *Canopus*—a critical and fatal error.

The *Canopus* from behind the hills fired on the German ships in an endeavor to protect the wireless station. Beyond the range of her guns hovered the lighter German cruisers *Dresden*, *Leipzig*, and *Nürnberg* to await the outcoming of the *Glasgow*. Both the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* concentrated their fire on the *Canopus*, and when the *Glasgow*, accompanied by the *Carnarvon*, *Cornwall*, and *Kent*, made her appearance it did not change the battle formation of the Germans, for the *Canopus* was still the only large vessel they were aware of. Now the *Leipzig* came nearer in order to take up the fight with the lighter British ships. By nine in the morning the German ships were drawn out in single file, running parallel with the shore in a northeasterly direction. At the head of the line was the *Gneisenau*, followed by the *Dresden*, *Scharnhorst*, *Nürnberg*, and *Leipzig*,

in that order. They thought that this would entice what they believed to be the whole of the British force present into coming out for a running fight, and in which the old *Canopus* would be left behind to be finished after the lighter vessels were done for. But all this time the *Invincible* and *Inflexible* were silent with their guns, though there was bustle enough aboard them while their coaling was being hurried.

By ten o'clock these two larger ships were ready with steam up and decks cleared, and they came out from behind the hills. Von Spee saw that discretion was the better part of valor and gave orders for his ships to make off at full speed. For a time the two squadrons kept parallel to each other at a distance of twelve miles, with the British squadron—the *Invincible* and *Inflexible* leading—north of the German ships. The *Baden* and *Santa Isabel,* two transports that had been part of the German squadron, were unable to keep up with the others and headed south, pursued by the *Bristol* and *Macedonia.* The two British battle cruisers were faster than any other ships in either squadron, and while pulling up on the German ships were in danger of pulling away from their own ships. To avoid the latter, Admiral Sturdee kept down their speed and was content with taking a little longer to get within gun range of Von Spee's ships. By two o'clock the distance between them was about 16,000 yards; the *Invincible* and *Inflexible* had now left the rest of the British squadron far behind and took issue with the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* respectively. The remaining British ships, with the exception of the *Carnarvon,* gave attention to the three lighter German cruisers and the *Eitel Friedrich,* which had broken from the first formation and were now pointing southeast.

Von Spee ordered the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* to turn broadside to the enemy. Shells were falling upon the German ships with fair accuracy, but their return fire could do little damage to the British ships, because the range was a little too great for the German 8.2-inch guns. Those of the *Inflexible* and *Invincible* were of the 12-inch type.

All four ships were belching forth heavy black smoke that hung low over the water after it left the funnels. A moderate breeze

carried it northward, and Von Spee moved his ships this way and that till his smoke blew straight against the guns of the British ships, making it almost impossible for the British gunners to take aim and note effect. But the superior speed of the two British battle cruisers stood them in good stead, and their commanders brought them up south of the enemy—on their other side. It was now the German gunners who found the smoke in their faces, and the advantage was with the British.

By three o'clock in the afternoon fire had broken out on the *Scharnhorst* and Von Spee replied to Sturdee's inquiry that he would not quit fighting, though some of his guns were out of action and those which still replied to the Britisher did now only at intervals. There was evidently something wrong with the machinery that brought shells and ammunition to her guns from out of her hold, the fire probably interfering with it. A 12-inch shell cut right through her third funnel and carried it completely off the ship. She turned so that she could bring her starboard guns into action, and they did so feebly. The fire on board her grew worse and worse, and it could be seen blood-red through holes made by the shells from the *Invincible* whenever her hull showed through the dense clouds of escaping steam that enveloped her. Just at four o'clock she began to list to port, thus having her starboard guns put out of action, for they pointed toward the sky, and the shells which came from them described parabolas, dropping into the water at safe distance from the English ship. More and more she listed, till her port beam ends were in the cold waters of the South Atlantic, and while in that position she sank some fifteen minutes later.

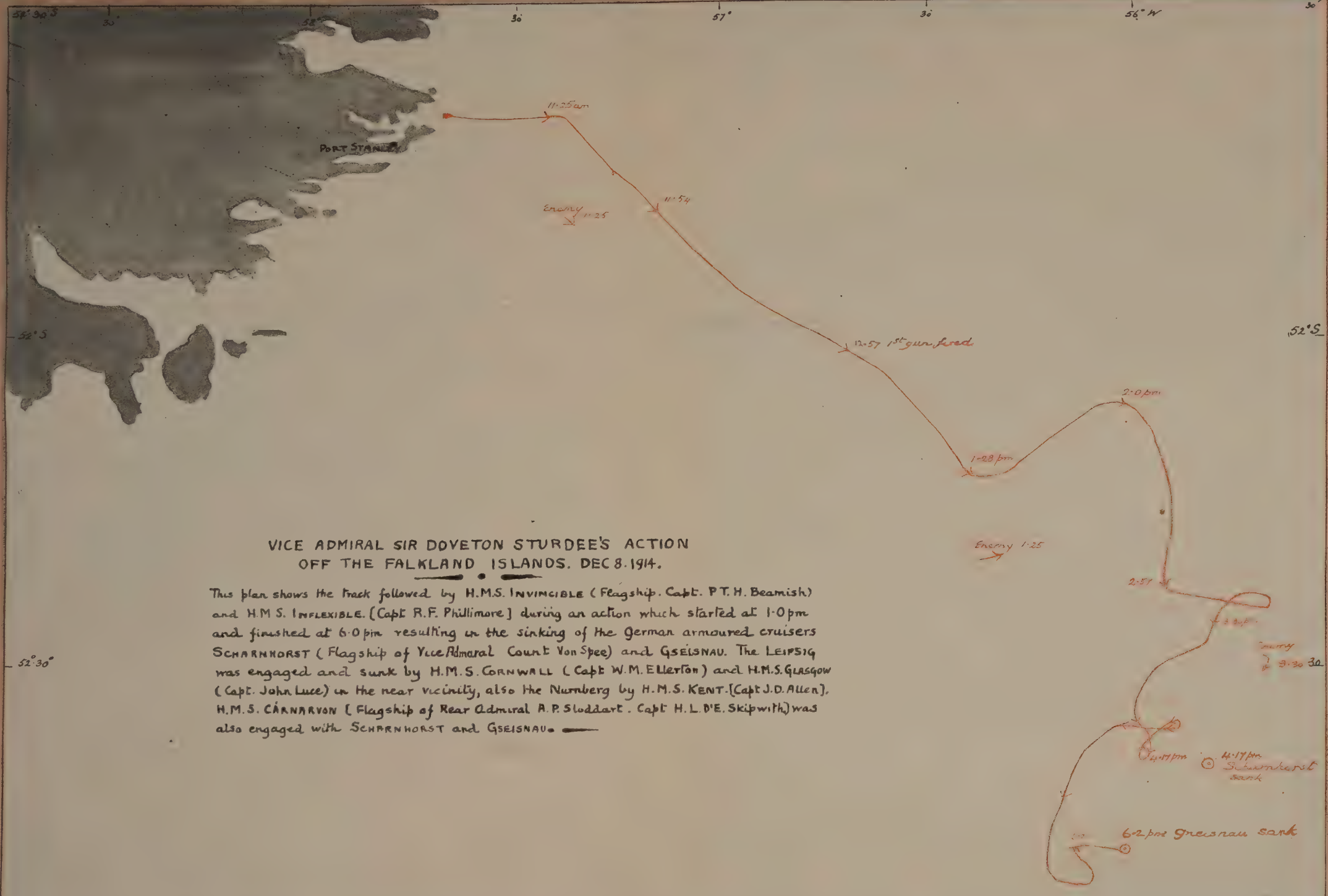
Meanwhile the duel between the *Gneisenau* and *Inflexible* had been going on. A 12-inch shell from one of the British cruisers struck one of the after gun turrets of the *Gneisenau* and swept it overboard. The German ship used the sinking *Scharnhorst* as a screen and tried to take on both British ships. Still she was able to plant some effective shells against the *Invincible* as a final reply. By half-past five she was listing heavily to starboard and her engines had stopped. The British ship, thinking she was surely done for, ceased firing at her and watched her for ten minutes,

while a single gun on board of her fired at intervals. The three ships *Carnarvon, Inflexible,* and *Invincible* now closed in on her and punished her till the flag at her stern was hauled down. But the ensign at her peak continued to fly. Just at six o'clock, with this color still in position, she suddenly heeled to starboard, while the men of her crew made hastily up her slanting decks and then climbed over on to the exposed part of her upturned port side. Many of these unfortunate men had time to jump into the sea, but others were caught when she suddenly disappeared beneath the surface.

There remained the task of picking up her survivors, but they were not numerous, for the shock of the cold water killed a large number. Having picked up those whom they could, the three British ships signaled the news of their victories to the distant cruisers which were fighting it out with the *Dresden, Leipzig, Nürnberg,* and *Eitel Friedrich.*

These lighter German cruisers had left the line of battle and had turned southward at just about the time that the action between the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* and *Inflexible* and *Invincible* began. They started off with the *Dresden* at the foremost point of a triangle and with the other two at the two remaining points. The *Glasgow, Cornwall,* and *Kent* went after them, while the *Carnarvon,* because her speed was not high enough to accompany them, remained with the battle cruisers. The *Glasgow* drew up with the German ships first, and at three o'clock began to fire on the *Leipzig* at a distance of 12,000 yards. As in the other action of that afternoon, the British ship took advantage of the fact that her guns had longer range, and she drew back from the German ships so that their guns could not reach her, though her own shells began to fall upon their decks. It was her object to keep them busy until she could be joined by her accompanying ships.

The *Cornwall* by four o'clock was also near enough to the *Leipzig* to open fire on her, and three hours later the German cruiser was having a time of it with a large fire in her hold. British faith in heavy armament with long range had again been vindicated. There was something of human interest in this duel



VICE ADMIRAL SIR DOVETON STURDEE'S ACTION OFF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. DEC 8. 1914.

This plan shows the track followed by H.M.S. INVINCIBLE (Flagship. Capt. P.T.H. Beamish) and H.M.S. INFLEXIBLE. [Capt R.F. Phillimore] during an action which started at 1·0 pm and finished at 6·0 pm resulting in the sinking of the German armoured cruisers SCHARNHORST (Flagship of Vice Admiral Count Von Spee) and GSEISNAU. The LEIPSIG was engaged and sunk by H.M.S. CORNWALL (Capt W.M. Ellerton) and H.M.S. GLASGOW (Capt. John Luce) in the near vicinity, also the Nurnberg by H.M.S. KENT. [Capt J.D. Allen]. H.M.S. CARNARVON [Flagship of Rear Admiral A.P. Stoddart. Capt H.L. D'E. Skipwith] was also engaged with SCHARNHORST and GSEISNAU.

between the *Glasgow* and the *Leipzig*. In their previous meeting, off Coronel, the German ship had had all the better of it and now the men of the British ship were out for revenge. Consequently the *Glasgow* signaled to the other British ships: "Stand off—I can manage this myself!" By eight o'clock in the evening the *Glasgow* had her in bad condition, and the *Carnarvon* came up to assist in raking her till there was nothing left but a mass of wreckage on her decks. But her flag was still flying and the British ships kept circling around her, thinking she still wished to fight, but not coming near enough to permit the use of her torpedo tubes. Miserable was the plight of the *Leipzig's* crew, for the two hundred men who were still alive were unable to get to her flag on account of the fire aboard her, and they had to remain inactive while the *Carnarvon* and *Glasgow* poured round after round into their ship. Only twelve remained alive at nine o'clock, when she began to list to port. Slowly more and more of the under-water part of her hull showed above the sea, and she continued to heel until her keel was right side up. In this position she sank, a large bubble marking the spot.

When the *Nürnberg* left the line of German ships at one o'clock, it was the British cruiser *Kent* that went after her, a vessel more heavily armed than the German ship, yet about a knot slower. But by hard work on the part of the engineers and stokers of the *Kent* she was able, by five o'clock, to get within firing distance of the *Nürnberg*. By a strange trick of fate the *Kent* was sister ship to the *Monmouth* which had fallen victim to one of the *Nürnberg's* torpedoes in the battle off Coronel. Here, too, was a duel with human interest in it. In their desire for revenge, the men of the *Kent* made fuel of even her furniture in order to speed up her engines. Her 6-inch guns now began to strike the German ship, and soon a fire broke out aboard her. She could have ended the German vessel by keeping a fire upon her while remaining too distant to be within range of the *Nürnberg's* 4-inch guns, but dusk was gathering and an evening mist was settling down upon the water. Consequently the *Kent* drew nearer to her adversary. The firing of the *Nürnberg* was then effective and more than twenty of her shells took good effect on

the British ship. It was only through prompt action on the part of her crew that her magazine was kept from exploding, for a shell set fire to the passage leading to it.

By seven o'clock in the evening the *Nürnberg* was practically "blind," for the flames from the fire that was raging on her had reached her conning tower. A member of her crew hauled down her flag, and the *Kent,* thinking that the fight was over, came close to her. While within a few hundred yards of her, however, she was greeted with new firing from the German cruiser. But this ceased under a raking from the *Kent's* starboard guns, and once again the flag of the *Nürnberg,* which had been run up on resumption of shooting, was hauled down. Members of her crew then had to jump into the sea to escape death from burning—the fire was quenched only when she went down at half past seven. The overworked engineers and stokers of the *Kent* were rewarded for their hard work by being permitted to come on deck to watch the *Nürnberg* go down, and all were soon engaged in helping to save the lives of the German sailors in the water. Just as the red glow of the sinking *Nürnberg* was dying down a large four-masted sailing ship, with all sails set, came out of the mist, her canvas tinged red by the flames' rays. Silently she went by, disappearing again into the mist, a weird addition to an uncanny scene.

Chasing the various units of the broken line of German ships had taken the British ships miles from each other, but after ten o'clock they began to reach each other by wireless signals and all made again for Stanley. It was not until the afternoon of the next day, however, that word came from the *Kent,* for her pursuit had taken her farther than any of the other British ships.

The *Bristol* and *Macedonia* had made good in their pursuit of the *Santa Isabel* and *Baden,* but in going after the *Dresden* the *Bristol* was not successful; the German ship got away in the rainstorm which came up during the evening, and the *Bristol,* which had hurried out of the harbor at Stanley not quite ready for battle, was unable to keep on her trail. The fast *Eitel Friedrich,* which as a merchant ship converted into a man-o'-warsman had

greater speed than any of the ships on either side, was able to get away also. These two German ships now took up their parts as raiders of allied commerce, and were not accounted for till months later. There was now on the high seas no German squadron.

CHAPTER XXXVII

SEA FIGHTS OF THE OCEAN PATROL

THERE were some minor naval operations in the waters of Europe which have been neglected while larger actions elsewhere were recorded. During the month of September, 1914, the British admiralty established a blockade of the mouth of the River Elbe with submarines, and the German boats of the same type were showing their worth also. On August 28, 1914, the day after the raid on Libau by the German cruiser *Augsburg*, the date of the battle of the Bight of Helgoland, the two Russian protected cruisers *Pallada* and *Bayan*, while patrolling the Russian coast in the Baltic Sea, were attacked by German submarines. Surrounded by these small craft, which made poor targets, the two Russian ships sought to escape by putting on full speed, but the former was hit by a torpedo and sank. The other got away.

All of the Allies, with the exception of France, had by the beginning of September, 1914, suffered losses in their navies. The navy of the republic was engaged in assisting a British fleet in maintaining supremacy in the Mediterranean, and kept the Austrian fleet bottled up in the Adriatic Sea. French warships bombarded Cattaro on September 10, 1914, to assist the military operations of the Montenegrin Government. These ships then proceeded to the island of Lissa and there destroyed the wireless station maintained by Austria. The Austrian navy made no appearance while the allied fleets scoured the lower coast of Dalmatia, bringing down lighthouses, destroying wireless stations, and bombarding the islands of Pelagosa and Lesina. On

the 19th of September, 1914, they returned to Lissa and landed a force which took possession of it, thus establishing a new naval base against the Central Powers' navies.

Duels between pairs of ships took place in various seas. The career of the raider *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse,* a fast converted liner, was ended by the British ship *Highflyer,* a cruiser, near the Cape Verde Islands, on August 27, 1914, after the former had sunk the merchantman *Hyades* and had stopped the mail steamer *Galician.* The greater speed of the German vessel was of no advantage to her, for she had been caught in the act of coaling. What then transpired was not a fight, for in armament the two were quite unequal. She soon sank under the *Highflyer's* fire, her crew having been rescued by her colliers.

The next duel took place between the *Carmania* and *Cap Trafalgar,* British and German converted liners, respectively. They met on September 14, 1914, in the Atlantic off South America. In view of the fact that at the beginning of the war these two ships had been merchantmen and had been armed and commissioned after the outbreak of hostilities, this engagement was something of the nature of those between privateersmen in the old days. In speed, size, and armament they were about equal. For nearly two hours they exchanged shots between 3,000 and 9,000 yards, and markmanship was to determine the victory. The shots from the *Carmania* struck the hull of the other ship near the water line repeatedly, and the British commander was wise enough to present his stern and bow ends more often than the length of the *Carmania's* sides. At the end of the fight the German ship was afire and sank. Her crew got off safely in her colliers, and the British ship made off because her wireless operator heard a German cruiser, with which the *Cap Trafalgar* had been in communication, signaling that she was hastening to the liner's aid.

Only two days before this the British cruiser *Berwick* captured the converted liner *Spreewald* in the North Atlantic, where she had been trying to interrupt allied commercial vessels.

Germany kept up her policy of attrition by clever use of submarines and mines. The British battleship *Audacious,* while on patrol duty off the coast of Ireland in the early days of the war,

met with a disaster of some sort and was brought to her home port in a sinking condition. The rigors of the British censorship almost kept the news of this out of the British papers and from the correspondents of foreign papers. It was reported that she had struck a mine, that she had been torpedoed, and that she had been made the victim of either a spy or a traitor who caused an internal explosion. The truth was never made clear. Rumors that she had gone down were denied by the British admiralty some months later, when they reported her repaired and again doing duty, but this was counteracted by a report that one of the ships that was completed after the start of hostilities had been given the same name.

About the sinking of the *Hawke* there was less conjecture. This vessel had gained notoriety in times of peace by having collided with the *Olympic* as the latter left port on her maiden voyage to New York. On the 15th of October, 1914, while patrolling the northern British home waters she was made the target of the torpedo of a German submarine and went down, but the *Theseus,* which had been attacked at the same time, escaped.

Four German destroyers were to be the next victims of the war in European waters. On October 17, 1914, the *S-115, S-117, S-118,* and *S-119* while doing patrol duty off the coast of the Netherlands, came up with a British squadron consisting of the cruiser *Undaunted* and the destroyers *Legion, Lance,* and *Loyal.* An engagement followed, in which damage was done to the British small boats and the four German destroyers were sunk. Captain Fox, senior British officer, had been on the *Amphion* when she sank the *Königin Luise* and had been rescued after being knocked insensible by the explosion of the mine that sent the *Amphion* to the bottom.

The exploit of Lieutenant Commander Horton in the British submarine *E-9* when he sank the *Hela* has already been narrated. The same commander, with the same craft, during the first week of October, 1914, proceeded to the harbor of the German port of Emden, whence had sailed many dangerous German submarines and destroyers that preyed on British ships. He lay submerged there for a long period, keeping his men amused with

a phonograph, and then carefully came to the surface. Through the periscope he saw very near him a German destroyer, but he feared that the explosion of a torpedo sent against her would damage his own craft, so he allowed her to steam off, and when she was 600 yards away he let go with two torpedoes. The second found its mark, and the *S-126* was no more. He immediately went beneath the surface and escaped the cordon of destroyers which immediately searched for him. By October 7 the *E-9* was back in Harwich, its home port.

On the 31st of October, 1914, the cross-channel steamer *Invicta* received the S. O. S. signal and went to rescue the crew of the old British cruiser *Hermes,* which had been struck by two torpedoes from a German submarine near Dunkirk. All but forty-four of her men were saved.

The next victim of a German submarine was the gunboat *Niger,* which, in the presence of thousands of persons on the shore at Deal, foundered without loss of life on November 11, 1914. But one of the German submarines was to go to the bottom in retaliation. On the 23d of November the *U-18* was seen and rammed off the Scotch coast, and some hours later was again seen near by. This time she was floating on the surface and carrying a white flag. The British destroyer *Garry* brought up alongside of her and took off her crew, just as she foundered.

Three days later the *Bulwark,* a British battleship of 15,000 tons and carrying a crew of 750 officers and men, was blown up in the Thames while at anchor at Sheerness. It was never discovered whether she was a victim of a torpedo, a mine, or an internal explosion. It is possible that a spy had placed a heavy charge of explosives within her hull. Only fourteen men of her entire complement survived the disaster.

It was in November, 1914, also, that the sometime German cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau,* now flying the Turkish flag, became active again. As units in a Turkish fleet they bombarded unfortified ports on the Black Sea on the first day of the month. Retaliation for this was made by the Allies two days later when a combined fleet of French and English battleships bombarded the Dardanelles forts, inflicting a certain amount of damage.

On the 18th of November, 1914, the *Goeben* and *Breslau* engaged a Russian fleet off Sebastopol. The composition of this Russian fleet was never made public by the Russian admiralty, but it is known that the Russian battleship *Evstafi* was the flagship. She came up on the starboard side of the two German ships and opened fire on the nearer, the *Goeben,* at a distance of 8,000 yards. The latter, hit by the Russian 12-inch guns was at first unable to reply because the first shots set her afire in several places, but she finally let go with her own guns and after a fourteen-minute engagement she sailed off into a fog. Her sister ship the *Breslau* took no part in the exchange of shots, and also made off. The damage done to the *Goeben* was not enough to put her out of commission; the *Evstafi* suffered slight damage and had twenty-four of her crew killed.

While the daring exploits of German submarines were winning the admiration of the entire world for their operations in the northern naval theatre of war, the British submarine commander, Holbrook, with the *B-11* upheld the prestige of this sort of craft in the British navy. He entered the waters of the Dardanelles on the 13th of December, 1914, and submerging, traveled safely through five lines of Turkish mines and sent a torpedo against the hull of the Turkish battleship *Messudiyeh.* The *B-11* slowly came to the surface to see what had been the result of her exploit, and her commander, through the periscope saw her going down by the stern. It was claimed later by the British that she had sunk, a claim which was officially denied by the Turks. Her loss to Turkey, if it did occur, was not serious, for she was too old to move about, and her only service was to guard the mine fields. The *B-11* after being pursued by destroyers again submerged for nine hours and came successfully from the scene of the exploit.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

WAR ON GERMAN TRADE AND POSSESSIONS

WITH the exceptions of the deeds done by the German sea raiders the remaining naval history of the first six months of the war had to do for the most part with British victories. When Von Spee's squadron, with the exception of the light cruiser *Dresden,* which was afterward sunk at the Island of Juan Fernandez, was dispersed off the Falkland Islands there was no more possibility of there being a pitched fight between German and British fleets other than in the North Sea.

England began then to hit at the outlying parts of the German Empire with her navy. The cruiser *Pegasus,* before being destroyed by the *Königsberg* at Zanzibar on September 20, 1914, had destroyed a floating dock and the wireless station at Dar-es-Salaam, and the *Yarmouth,* before she went on her unsuccessful hunt for the *Emden,* captured three German merchantmen.

As far back as the middle of August, 1914, the capture of German Samoa had been planned and directed from New Zealand. On the 15th of that month an expedition sailed from Wellington, and in order to escape the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst,* went first to French New Caledonia, where the British cruisers *Psyche, Philomel,* and *Pyramus* were met with. On the 23d of the month, this force, which was augmented by the French cruiser *Montcalm* and the Australian battleships *Australia* and *Melbourne,* sailed first for the Fiji Islands and then to Apia on Upolu Island off Samoa. They reached there on the 30th. There was, of course, no force on the island to withstand that of the enemy, and arrangements for surrender of the place were made by signal. Marines were sent ashore; the public buildings were occupied, the telegraph and telephone wires cut, the wireless station destroyed and the German flag hauled down, to be replaced by the Union Jack. The Germans taken prisoners were rewarded for the kind treatment they had accorded British residents before the appearance of this British force, and were sent to New Zealand.

The next German possession to be taken was that in the Bismarck Archipelago. It was known that there was a powerful wireless station at Herbertshöhen, the island known as New Pomerania. A small landing party was put ashore on the island in the early morning of September 11, 1914, and made its way, without being discovered, to the town. The surprised inhabitants were too frightened to do anything until this party left to go further on to the wireless station. By that time it met with some resistance, but overcame it. A few days later another landing party had captured the members of the staff of the governor of New Pomerania, together with the governor himself, at Bougainville, Solomon Islands, whence they had fled. The wireless stations on the island of Yap, in the Carolines, and on Pleasant Island were destroyed during the following month.

Perhaps the strangest operations of naval character ever performed were the inland "sea" fights in Africa. The great Nyassa Lake in Africa was the scene of this fighting. With its entire western shore in British possession and with a goodly part of its waters within the territory of German East Africa, it was not unnatural that fighting should take place there. Both countries maintained small armed vessels on the lake. The British ship *Gwendolen,* a 350-ton craft, had been built on the Clyde and had been sent to Nyassa Lake in sections and there assembled and launched in 1898. During August, she fought with a German ship and captured it. The fighting on the lake could not, however, determine the success of the military operations taking place in those regions.

The preponderance of British naval strength was beginning to tell severely upon German trade by the end of 1914, and her boast that through her navy she would starve out Germany aroused the German Government greatly. In answer to these British threats, Grand Admiral von Tirpitz, German Secretary of Marine, in an interview given to an American newspaper correspondent, hinted that Germany's retaliation would be a war on British merchant ships by German submarines.

The interview at the time aroused but mild comment; the idea

was a new one, and the question immediately arose as to whether such action would be within the limits of international law. For the time being, however, Von Tirpitz's words remained nothing more than a threat. It was not until months later that the threat was made good, and the consequences must form a separate part of this narrative, to be given in Volume III.

The seaplane, the newest naval machine at the time, and as yet an untried factor, was to see maiden service first at the hands of the British, when on the 25th of December a raid on Cuxhaven was made. Seven naval seaplanes attacked a fleet of German cruisers and destroyers lying off Schilling Roads near the German port. The men who thus made history in aviation were Francis E. T. Hewlett, son of the famous novelist, accompanied by seven pilots. A naval force consisting of a light cruiser, a flotilla of destroyers and another of submarines brought up near Helgoland during the morning. When this naval force was first discovered by the lookouts on Helgoland, there immediately appeared approaching from the German base two Zeppelins and a number of German seaplanes, together with some submarines. Meanwhile, from the decks of the British craft there went up the seven British seaplanes.

In order to give them a place for landing after they returned from their raid, it was necessary for the British ships to remain in the vicinity for three hours. The *Undaunted* and *Arethusa*, with the rest of the British force, had to "dance" about, dodging the submarines which were attacking them from beneath the surface of the water and the aircraft hovering over them. Bombs dropped from the latter failed to find their targets, and by swift maneuvering the torpedoes shot at them were also caused to go far wide of the mark.

The British airmen dropped their bombs on points of military importance at Cuxhaven, but their effect was kept secret by the German authorities. Six of the seven returned to the squadron and were picked up by submarines. Three of the seaplanes were wrecked and had to be abandoned. Fog not only prevented the British airmen from doing their best work, but it kept the marksmen on the German aircraft also from hitting the ships on the

waters beneath them. This raid had been made in answer to a great outcry that had gone up from the British public after German warships had raided the eastern coast of England.

CHAPTER XXXIX

RAIDS ON THE ENGLISH COAST

DURING the first days of November, 1914, the Germans planned and carried out a general surprise for the British navy. After the battle in the Bight of Helgoland, back in August, the British thought that Germany would continue to keep her navy within the protection of her coast defenses, perhaps forever. But such was not her intention.

On the afternoon of November 2, 1914, there gathered off some part of Germany's northern shore a squadron consisting of the battle cruisers *Von der Tann, Seydlitz,* and *Moltke,* the protected cruisers *Kolberg, Strassburg,* and *Graudenz,* the armored cruisers *Yorck* and *Blücher,* together with some destroyers. The slowest of these vessels could make a speed of 25 knots, and the fastest, the *Graudenz* and *Moltke,* could make 28 knots. The guns of the *Blücher* were the heaviest in the squadron, those of her primary battery being 12-inch cannon. Ten-inch guns were on the decks of the other ships.

The first that the rest of the world knew of the gathered force was at evening, November 2, 1914, when a fleet of British fishermen hailed them with friendly signs, thinking them British ships, not far from Lowestoft some time after six o'clock. The fishermen started at once for their home ports in order to apprise the British authorities, but they had not gone far when the news was flashed to the British admiralty office from the wireless room of the British gunboat *Halcyon.* But only the first few words of the warning were able to get through, for the wireless operators on the German ships "jammed" their keys, and a few shots from the German guns were sufficient to bring down the wireless apparatus

of the gunboat as well as one of her funnels. She turned off and made for her home port to report the news some hours later.

It was only ten miles from the British shores that the *Halcyon* had sighted the German ships, but they were able, nevertheless, to elude all British warships in those regions and proceeded to Yarmouth, firing at the wireless station, the naval yards, and the town itself. Fearing mines near the coast, the German commander did not attempt to come in too close, with the result that many of the German shots fell short, and, in spite of the fact that the bombardment lasted for nearly half an hour, the damage done by them was not great.

The inhabitants of the towns of Lowestoft and Yarmouth were asleep in the early hours of the morning when they first heard the booming of the German guns. In the darkness of the British winter they hurriedly went down to the water front, where, far out at sea, they could make out faintly the hull of but one vessel, but the red flashes from the booming guns showed that other ships were present. The crowds on the shore watched two British destroyers and two submarines, which had been lying in the harbor, put out after the German force. The latter by that time had started off, dropping in its wake a number of floating mines. This strategy resulted in the loss of the submarine *D-5,* which hit one of the mines and sank immediately. The German cruiser *Yorck* was claimed by the British to have hit a mine also, with the result that she sank and carried down with her some 300 of her crew. This was denied later by the German admiralty, and like all such controversies must remain a secret with the officials of both Governments.

Judged by material effects, this raid was a failure. But in view of the fact that the Germans had shown that a squadron could actually elude the large number of British warships patrolling the North Sea, and was actually able to strike at the British coast, it was a moral victory for Germany.

"We must see clearly that in order to fight with success we must fight ruthlessly, in the proper meaning of the word." These were the words of Count Reventlow, when he heard the news of the defeat of the German squadron commanded by Von Spee off

the Falkland Islands. As a result, and in revenge for this defeat, the German admiralty planned a second raid on the coast towns of England. The towns chosen for attack this time were Hartlepool, Scarborough, and Whitby. The first of these was a city of 100,000 persons, and its principal business was shipbuilding. Scarborough was nothing more than a seaside resort, to which each summer and at Christmas were attracted thousands of Englishmen who sought to spend their vacations near the water. Whitby, though it had some attractions for holiday crowds, such as a quaint cathedral, was at most nothing more than a home port for a number of fishing boats.

It was claimed later by the Germans that these three towns, according to the accepted definitions in international law, were fortified ports, and consequently open to attack by hostile forces. In reply the British claimed that there was nothing in any of the three which could bring them into that category. This controversy is still another which must remain undecided. There is, however, the fact that the information which the German Government had obtained about them, and which it made public, must necessarily have been less comprehensive than that supplied to the world at large by the British authorities. Guidebooks, as well as tourists who have visited the place, reported that an old castle stood in Scarborough which in past centuries had been a fort, but which at the outbreak of the war was nothing more than a show place. The only gun in place at the castle was an obsolete piece that had seen service in the Crimean War. Whitby, in times of peace, at least, had not even such "armament."

It was on the 16th of December, 1914, that this second raid took place. Over the North Sea there hung a light mist. The German admiralty did not afterward make public the names of the cruisers which participated in this expedition, but they are believed to have been the *Derfflinger, Blücher, Von der Tann, Seydlitz,* and *Graudenz.* It was at eight o'clock in the morning that the residents of the three English towns first heard the booming of the German guns, and coast guards near by were able, with the aid of very strong glasses, to make out the hulls of the attacking cruisers some miles out to sea. It was not thought

possible that the Germans could again elude the British ships on patrol in these waters, and the guards therefore thought that the firing came from ships flying the Union Jack and tried to signal to them. But they came to realize the truth when they received no answering signals.

As it was not known but that the Germans would make an attempt to land, the guards in the obsolete fort at Hartlepool took their positions and two small patrol boats in the harbor made ready to give what resistance they could. These, the *Doon* and the *Hardy,* drew the fire of the German guns, and, seeing it was impossible to withstand the German fire, they made off and escaped. This time the Germans were better informed about the conditions they dealt with, and evidently had no fear of mines, for they came to within two miles of the shore. The forts on shore were bombarded and private houses near by were hit by German shells, killing two women who lived in one of them. The forts tried to reply to the German guns, but those of the English battery were by no means modern, and firing them only served to further convince the Germans that the place was fortified; they inflicted no damage on the German ships.

The lighthouse was the next target chosen by the Germans, one of their shells going right through it, but leaving it standing. Within fifty minutes 1,500 German shells were fired into the town and harbor. While two of the three cruisers which were engaged in bombarding drew off further to sea and fired at Hartlepool, the third remained to finish the battery on shore, but in spite of the fact that it was subjected to long and heavy firing, it was not so terribly damaged. Many of the shells from the other two ships went over the towns entirely and buried themselves in the countryside that heretofore had been turned up only by the peaceful plow. Other shells did havoc in the business and residential sections of Hartlepool and West Hartlepool, bringing down buildings and killing civilians in them as well as on the streets.

At about the same hour the coast guards near Scarborough reported the approach of foreign ships off the coast, and then telephoned that the strangers were German cruisers and that

they had begun to bombard the town. A German shell destroyed the shed from which the telephone message had come and the warnings from it ceased. It was seen by those on shore that the attack here was being made by four ships, two of them cruisers and two of them mine layers, only 800 yards out in the water. This time they were not handicapped by the fact that they had to stand out so far from shore, and it was a surprise to the natives to see ships of such draft come so close to land—a fact which convinced the British authorities that spies had been at work since the first raid, sending to the German admiralty either charts or detailed descriptions of the region.

The castle was badly damaged by their fire; the town itself came next, the Grand Hotel coming in for its share of destruction. They did little injury to a wireless station in the suburbs, but hit quite a number of residences, the gas and water works.

Half an hour afterward the two cruisers which had fired upon Scarborough appeared off Whitby and began to fire at the signal station there. In the ten minutes that the bombardment of Whitby lasted some 200 shells fell into the place. This time the fact that the German ships came close to the shore worked against them, for there are high cliffs close to the water at the spot and it was necessary for the German gunners to use a high angle, which did not give them much chance to be accurate. The German ships next turned seaward and made for their home ports.

The scenes enacted in the three towns during the bombardment and afterwards were tragic. Considering the fact, however, that the persons under fire were civilians, many of them women and children, their coolness was remarkable. They did not know what should be done, for the thought of bombardment was the last thing that had come into the minds of the authorities when England went to war, and as a result no instructions for such an emergency had been issued by the authorities. Some thought it best to stay within doors, some thought it best to go into the streets. In Hartlepool a large crowd gathered in the railway station, some fully dressed, some only in night clothes.

Many of the women carried babies in their arms and were followed by older children who clung to their skirts. Policemen

led this crowd out of the station and started them along a street which would bring them out into the country, but while they were passing the library they were showered by the stone work as it fell when hit by the German shells. One shell, striking the street itself, killed three of the six children who were fleeing along it in company with their mother. Many other persons met deaths as tragic either within their own homes or on the streets. St. Mary's Catholic Church as well as the Church of St. Hilda were damaged, as were the shipyards and the office of the local newspaper. The destruction of the gas works left the town in almost complete darkness for many nights afterward. The authorities issued a proclamation ordering all citizens to remain indoors for a time, and then began to count the number of dead and injured. The first estimate gave the former as 22 and the latter as 50, but subsequent reckoning showed that both figures were too low.

In Scarborough most of the inhabitants were still in bed when the bombardment started and for a few minutes did not become excited, thinking the booming of the guns was the sound of thunder. But when the shells began to drop on their houses they knew better. Many were killed or wounded while they hastily got into their clothes. One shell hit St. Martin's Church while communion was being held. Here, too, the railway station was made the objective of many refugees, and the police did what they could to send the women and children out of range of fire by putting them on trains of extra length. As in all such scenes there were humorous sides to it. One old workman, while hurrying along a street was heard to say: "This is what comes of having a Liberal Government." In all, about 6,000 people left the town immediately and did not return for some days.

Similar were the scenes enacted in Whitby when the turn of that town came. Only two persons were killed in that town, while thirteen casualties were reported from Scarborough.

The raid immediately became the subject for discussion in the newspapers of every country on the globe. In England it was bitterly denounced, and the term "baby killers" was applied to the men of the German navy. In Germany it was justified on the

ground that the German admiralty had information and proof that the bombarded cities were fortified, and therefore, under international law, subject to bombardment. Nor did the German journalists lose the opportunity to declare that Great Britain no longer ruled the waves nor to show pride over the fact that their fleet had successfully left the German coast and had successfully returned to its home port. The war, they said—and truthfully—had been brought to England's door.

The year 1914 ended gloomily for the British public; nothing could have disappointed them more than the failure to catch the Germans. Nor did the new year open brightly for Britain, for on the first day of January, 1915, there came the news of disaster to the *Formidable*, sister ship to the *Bulwark*. The lesson of the *Hogue*, *Cressy*, and *Aboukir* had not been learned, for this ship went down under the same circumstances. While patrolling near Torbay during a night on which there was a bright moon and a calm sea, this ship, in company with seven other large ships unaccompanied by a "screen" of destroyers, was hit by a torpedo fired from a German submarine. Most of her crew were asleep when the torpedo struck and damaged the engine room so much that no lights could be turned on. In the darkness they hurried to the deck, which was slanting from her list. In obedience to orders issued by the admiralty after the sinking of the *Cressy* and the ships with her, the rest of the fleet immediately sailed away from the scene, so that no more of them would be hit. Only a light cruiser stood by the sinking *Formidable*. A second torpedo struck her and this had the effect of letting water into her hold on the side which was slowly coming out of the water. She took a position with even keel after that, and this fact enabled most of her crew to get off safely before she sank.

Once more the Germans were to attempt a raid on the coast cities of England. The date of this third attempt was January 24, 1915. This time the British were a bit better prepared, for a squadron of battle cruisers, consisting of the *Lion*, *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *New Zealand*, and *Indomitable*, put out from a port in the north of England at about the same time that the Germans left their base. All of these ships, with the

exception of the last named, were quite fast, having speeds of from 25 to 28.5 knots; they were at the same time carrying heavy armament—13.5-inch guns in the main batteries. In company with them went four cruisers of what is known in England as the "town class"; these were the *Nottingham, Birmingham, Lowestoft,* and *Southampton,* together with the three light cruisers *Arethusa, Aurora,* and *Undaunted,* and a squadron of detroyers. The German fleet which was engaged in this raid consisted of the *Seydlitz, Moltke, Derfflinger,* and *Blücher,* in company with a fleet of destroyers. The German ships were not quite as fast as the English ships, nor did they carry guns of such range or destructive power as their British opponents.

Early in the first hours of January 24, these two forces, unknown to each other were steaming head on, the Germans taking a course leading northwest and the English a course leading southeast. At twenty minutes past seven in the morning the *Aurora* first sighted the enemy and engaged him immediately with her two 6-inch guns, sending at the same time word of her discovery to Admiral Beatty. Admiral Hipper, the German commander, as soon as he knew the enemy had sighted him, turned about and started to steam in a southeasterly direction.

In view of the results of this battle, it is best to go into the matter of the tactics involved. Tactics may be of two kinds—spontaneous or premeditated. When two hostile fleets meet on the high sea far from the base of either, the object of each is the complete destruction of the other, and the tactics employed are spontaneous. Such an action was that off Coronel. But on a closed sea such as the North Sea spontaneous tactics can rarely be used, for the reason that naval bases are too near, and from these there may slyly come reenforcements to one or the other or to both of the fighting fleets, making the arrangement of traps an easy matter. This is particularly true of the North Sea, on which it is possible for a fleet to leave Cuxhaven early in the evening and to be at Scarborough early the following morning. In addition, sailing is restricted because an unusually large portion of its waters is too shallow to permit of the passage of large ships.

The Germans on this occasion had arranged a trap. They

knew that after making two successful raids on the English coast the British would keep even a closer watch for them. When they sailed from their base, it was with the expectation of meeting a hostile force, as was undoubtedly their expectation on the first two raids. But they did not intend to fight matters out on high waters. What they wanted to do was to get the British involved in a good running engagement, steering a southeasterly course the while and luring the British ships within striking force of a waiting fleet of superdreadnoughts and perhaps land guns and mines. This explains why Admiral Hipper turned stern as soon as he got into touch with the enemy.

There was a distance of fourteen miles between the two fleets when the *Lion* got her heavy guns into action. The German line was off her port (left) bow. At the head of that line was the *Moltke*, and following her came the *Seydlitz*, *Derfflinger*, *Blücher*, and the destroyers in the order given. At the head of the British line was the *Lion*, followed by the *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *New Zealand*, and *Indomitable* in the order named. The other cruisers and the destroyers of the British fleet brought up the rear. In the chase which followed the Germans were handicapped by the fact that the *Blücher* was far too slow to be brought into action, which meant that either the other ships must leave her behind to certain destruction or that they must slow down to keep with her. They chose the latter course, while her stokers did their best to increase her speed. In the English fleet there was the same trouble with the *Indomitable*, but inasmuch as the British were the pursuers and had a preponderance in ships and in the range of their guns, this did not matter so much to them. But the stokers of the *Indomitable* worked as hard, if not harder, than those of the *Blücher*.

By half past nine the two forces were seven miles apart and the battle was on. It is necessary here to give certain facts about gunnery on a large modern battleship. Firing at a range of seven miles means a test of mathematics rather than of the mere matter of pointing guns. At that distance the target—the ship to be hit—is barely visible on the sky line on the clearest and calmest sea. If a hole the size of the head of a pin be made

in a piece of cardboard and the latter he held about a foot and a half from the eye, the distant ship will just about fill the hole.

The guns on the modern battleships are not "laid"; that is, they are not aimed as were the cannon of past days or the rifle of to-day. It is set toward its target by two factors. The first is known as "traverse," which means how far to the left or right it must be pointed in a horizontal plane. The second factor is "elevation"—how far up or down it must be pointed in a vertical plane. The latter factor determines how far it will throw its projectile, and up to a certain point the higher the gun is pointed the further will go the shell. A certain paradox seems to enter here. It is a fact that a distant ship presents a target more easily hit if its bow or stern is toward the gunner. If it presents a broadside there is the danger that the shells will go either beyond the ship or will fall short of it, for the greatest beam on a warship is not much more than 90 feet. If the bow or stern is toward the gunner he has a chance of landing a shell on any part of the 600 or more feet of the ship's length. The first firing in a battle at a distance is known as "straddling," by which is meant that a number of shots are sent simultaneously, some falling short, some falling beyond the target, and some hitting it.

The man who really "aims" the gun never sees what he is shooting at. At some point of vantage on his ship one of the officers observes the enemy and reports to the chief gunner the distance, the direction, and the effect of the first shots. The gunnery officer then makes certain calculations, taking into consideration the speed of his own ship and the speed of the enemy ship. He knows that at a given moment his target will be at a given point. He knows also just how fast his shells will travel and makes calculations that enable him to place a shell at that point at just the right second. In this battle the shells of the British ship took about twenty seconds to go from the mouths of the guns to the German hulls. And they made a curve at the highest point of which they reached a distance of more than two miles; and most wonderful of all was the fact that at the beginning of the firing a man standing on the deck of one of the German

ships could not even see the ship which was firing the shells at her, though the weather was very clear.

By a quarter to ten o'clock the *Lion* had come up with and had passed the slow *Blücher,* firing broadsides into her as she went by. The *Tiger* then passed the unfortunate German ship, also letting her have a heavy fire, and then the *Princess Royal* did likewise. Finally the *New Zealand* was able to engage her and later even the slow *Indomitable* got near enough to do so. By that time the *Blücher* was afire and one of her gun turrets, with its crew and gun, had been swept off bodily by a British shell.

Meanwhile the *Lion, Tiger,* and *Princess Royal* kept straight ahead till they were able to "straddle" even the leading ship of the enemy's line. The *Tiger* and *Lion* poured shells into the *Seydlitz,* but were unable to do much damage to the *Moltke.* While they were thus engaged the *Princess Royal* singled out the *Derfflinger* for her target. The light British cruiser *Aurora, Arethusa,* and *Undaunted* were far ahead of the rest of the British fleet and were firing at the *Moltke,* but thick black smoke which poured from their funnels as their engines were speeded up got between the gunners of the *Lion* and their target, the *Moltke,* completely obscuring the latter. As a result the three light British cruisers were ordered to slow down and to take positions to the rear.

By eleven o'clock there were fires raging on both the *Seydlitz* and the *Derfflinger,* and Admiral Hipper decided to try to save his larger ships by sacrificing the destroyers that accompanied them. Consequently the German destroyers put their bows right toward the large British ships and charged, but the fire which they drew was too much for them and they gave up this maneuver.

The British destroyer *Meteor,* which had been maintaining a perilous position between the battleships, then attempted to torpedo the *Blücher,* which had fallen far to the rearward to be abandoned by the rest of the German fleet. Badly damaged as the *Blücher* was, the crew of one of her guns managed to get in some final shots, one of them nearly ending the career of the British destroyer. The *Arethusa* had also come up and prepared

to launch a torpedo. Cruiser and destroyer torpedoed her at about the same moment, and later, while within 200 yards of the sinking German ship the *Arethusa* sent another torpedo at her. She now began to list, although not greatly damaged, on her port side till her keel showed. Her crew showed remarkable bravery.

The men lined up as though at a review and began to sing the German national airs, intending to go to their deaths in that formation. But an officer on the *Arethusa* shouted to them through a megaphone to jump while they could to save their lives. This had a psychological effect, and as the starboard side of her hull slowly came up her men were seen scrambling on it from behind her taff rail and creeping down toward her keel. Some of them almost walked into the water while she was in that position. Her guns were pointing toward the sky, one of them slowly revolving. Finally, when she was completely upside down she went under. Many of her crew were picked up by British small boats, and her captain, who was one of them, was taken to England, where he died later from the results of this experience and was buried with full naval honors.

The German destroyers had meanwhile come between their own cruisers and those of the enemy and emitted volumes of heavy smoke, which they hoped would form an effective screen between the former and the gunners on the latter. Admiral Hipper then ordered all of his ships to turn northward, in the hope of getting away behind this screen, but the British admiral anticipated this maneuver and changed the course of his ships so that he again had the German ships in view after both fleets had driven through the smoke.

The *Lion* of the British fleet was chosen as the target for the German ships, and by keeping a concentrated fire upon her were able to do considerable damage. One shell penetrated the bow of the *Lion* as it was partly lifted out of the water on account of the great speed she was making; this shot hit her water tank and made it impossible for her to use her port engine from that time on. She slowed down. When she fell out of the line it was necessary for Admiral Beatty to leave her, and he transferred his flag to the destroyer *Attack*. But all of this took time and it was quite

long before he was able to rejoin his leading ships. By twenty minutes past twelve he had got aboard the *Princess Royal.*

Rear Admiral Moore automatically took up command of the British fleet while his senior officer was making these changes. It is not known what Admiral Moore's orders had been, but it is known that he suddenly ordered all ships to cease firing and allowed the German warships to proceed without further engaging them. By the time that Admiral Beatty was again on a battle cruiser the action was virtually over. The *Indomitable* passed a cable to the crippled *Lion* and towed the latter home, the rest of the British fleet keeping to the rearward to be ready for possible resumption of fighting.

Much criticism was made by the British press and by laymen on account of the sudden termination of the fight, and there was great complaint in England because the career of all the raiding German ships had not been brought to an end. But when the engagement ended the opposing fleets were within seventy miles of Helgoland, and the German admiralty had ready a fleet of dreadnoughts and another of battle cruisers to engage the British ships when they got within striking distance. By ending the fight when he did the British commander chose not to be led into this trap. Nor was there dissatisfaction in England alone. In Germany the complaint was that the ruse had not worked, and not long afterward Admiral von Ingenohl was replaced as commander of the High Sea Fleet by Admiral von Pohl. None of the blame for the failure was laid at the door of the officer who had actually been engaged in the fighting—Admiral Hipper—which showed that his senior officers had considered the engagement as part of a larger action.

CHAPTER XL

RESULTS OF SIX MONTHS' NAVAL OPERATIONS

THE first six months of naval operations in the Great War came to a close without battle between the main fleets of the navies of the warring nations. The British navy had kept open communication with the Continent, allowing the Expeditionary Force, as well as later military contingents, to get to the trenches in Flanders and France. It had, in addition, made possible the transportation of troops from Canada and Australia. The ports of France were open for commerce with America, which permitted the importation of arms and munitions, and the same privilege had been won for the ports in the British Isles.

The northern ports of the Central Powers were closed to commerce with all but the Scandinavian countries, and the over-sea German possessions, where they were accessible to naval attack, had been taken from her. The German and Austrian flags had been swept from the seven seas, with the exception of those on three or four German cruisers that now and then showed themselves capable of sinking a merchantman.

In the four engagements of importance which had been fought by the end of January, 1915, the British had been the victors in three—the battles of the Bight of Helgoland, the Falkland Islands, and the third German raid of January 24, 1915—the Germans had been victors in one—the fight off Coronel.

British and other allied ships were unable to inflict damage on the coast defenses of Germany, but the latter in two successful raids had been able to bombard British coast towns, offsetting in a way the loss of over-sea dominions.

Great Britain, after six months of naval warfare had lost three battleships, the *Bulwark, Formidable,* and *Audacious;** the five armored cruisers *Aboukir, Cressy, Hogue, Monmouth,* and

* The British admiralty did not clear up the mystery of her disaster.

SEA FIGHTS

AND THE

CRUISES OF GERMAN RAIDERS

THE EMDEN AND THE SYDNEY · FALKLAND
AND NORTH SEA BATTLES · SEARCHLIGHTS
SUBMARINES · WRECKS · SHIPPING ARTILLERY

Among the modern inventions which insure a battleship's efficiency is the searchlight, which must sweep not only the sea but the sky to find the enemy

Copyright, International News Service

The German steamer "Walküre" sunk in the harbor of Papeete, Tahiti, when the German cruisers "Scharnhorst" and "Gneisenau" shelled the town

Copyright, American Press Association

The Australian cruiser "Sydney" which caught and destroyed the raider "Emden" near the Cocos Islands

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The famous German raider "Emden" beached on one of the Cocos Islands after being wrecked by the "Sydney's" shells

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Rescuing drowning sailors after the naval battle near the Falkland Islands, in which the "Scharnhorst," "Gneisenau," "Nurnberg" and "Leipzig" were sunk

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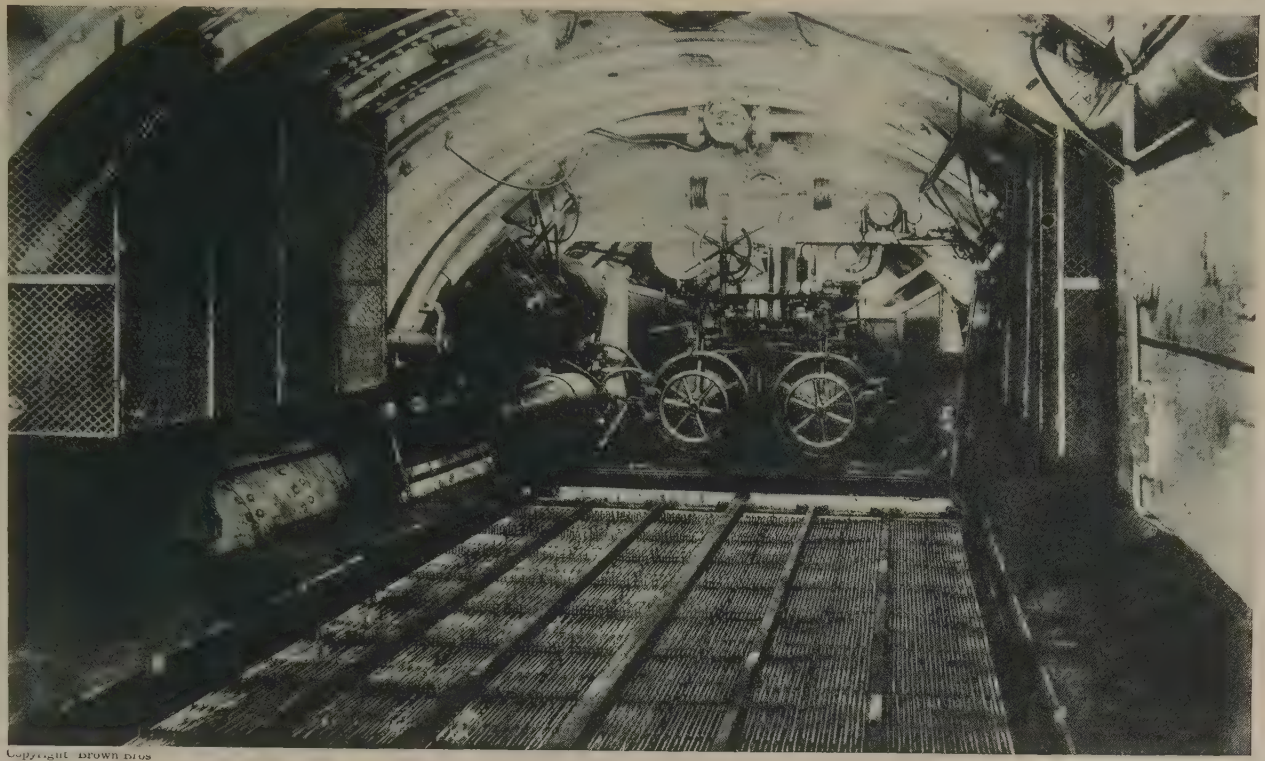
Canadian soldiers shipping a rapid-fire gun, on embarking at Montreal for England, to take their part in the Great War



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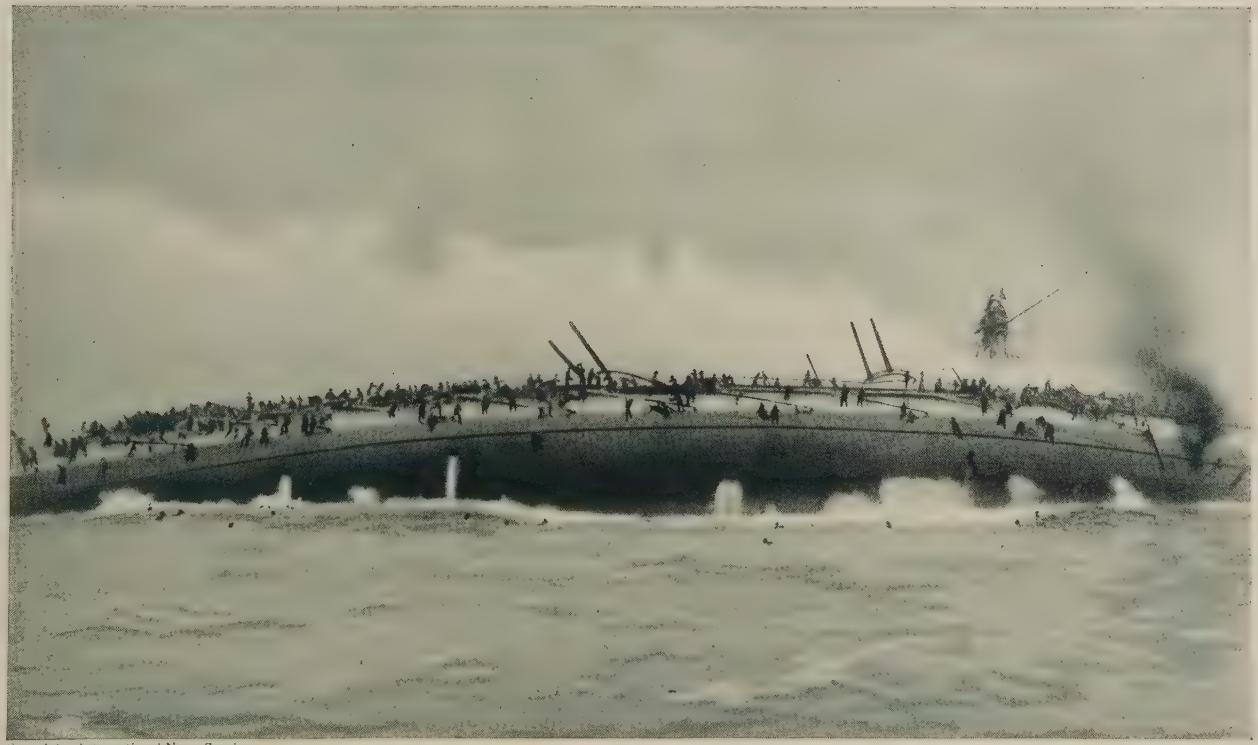
The interior of a submarine, showing torpedo tubes and batteries. The flooring which covers the batteries has been removed



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The German cruiser "Blücher" turning on her side as she sank in the North Sea battle of January 24, 1915. The other vessels of the German squadron escaped

Good Hope; the second-class cruisers *Hawke* and *Hermes;* the two third-class cruisers *Amphion* and *Pegasus;* the protected scout *Pathfinder* and the converted liner *Oceanic;* losses in destroyers and other small vessels were negligible.

Germany had lost no first-class battleships, but in third-class cruisers her loss was great, those that went down being the eleven ships *Ariadne, Augsburg, Emden, Graudenz, Hela, Köln, Königsberg, Leipzig, Nürnberg, Magdeburg, Mainz,* and the *Dresden;* she lost, also, the four armored cruisers *Blücher, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau,* and *Yorck;* the old cruiser *Geier* (interned); the three converted liners *Spreewald, Cap Trafalgar,* and *Kaiser Wilhelm;* and the mine layer *Königin Luise.*

The German policy of attrition had not taken off as many ships as had been lost by Germany herself, and, as England's ships so far outnumbered her own, it may well be said that the "whittling" policy was not successful. She made up for this by having still at large the cruiser *Karlsruhe* which damaged a great amount of commerce, and by the exploits of her submarines, far outshining those of the Allies.

Russia had lost the armored cruiser *Pallada,* and the *Jemchug,* a third-class cruiser, and the losses of the French and Austrian navies were not worth accounting. With regard to interned vessels both sides had losses. While the Germans were unable to use the great modern merchantmen which lay in American and other ports, and had to do without them either as converted cruisers or transports, the Allies were forced to detail warships to keep guard at the entrance of the various ports where these interned German liners might at any moment take to the high seas.

In naval warfare the number of ships lost is no determining factor in figuring the actual victory—the important thing being the existence or nonexistence of the grand fleets of the combatants after the fighting is finished. Viewed from such an angle, the fact that the Allies had left no German ships at large other than those in the North Sea, cannot entitle them to victory at the end of the first six months of war. So long as a German fleet remained intact and interned in neutral ports, naval

victory for the Allies had not come, though naval supremacy was indicated.

The fact was apparent, moreover, that while the Central Powers were being deprived of all their trade on the seas, the world's commerce endangered only by submarines was remaining wide open to the Allies.

PART III—THE WAR ON THE EASTERN FRONT

CHAPTER XLI

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THEATRE OF WARFARE

WORLD war—the prophecy of the ages—now threatened the foundations of civilization. Whether or not the modern era was to fall under the sword, as did the democracy of Greece and the mighty Roman Empire, was again to be decided on battle grounds that for seventy centuries have devoured the generations. The mountain passes were once more to reverberate with the battle cry — the roar of guns, the clank of artillery, the tramp of soldiery. The rivers were to run crimson with the blood of men; cities were to fall before the invaders; ruin and death were to consume nations. It was as though Xerxes, and Darius, and Alexander the Great, and Hannibal, and all the warriors of old were to return to earth to lead again gigantic armies over the ancient battle fields.

While the war was gaining momentum on the western battle grounds of Europe, gigantic armies were gathering in the East—there to wage mighty campaigns that were to hold in the balance the destiny of the great Russian Empire, the empire of Austria, the Balkan kingdoms—Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Bulgaria. The Turks were again to enter upon a war of invasion. Greece once more was to tremble under the sword. Even Egypt and Persia and Jerusalem itself, the battle grounds of the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Trojans, the bloody fields of paganism

and early Christianity, were all to be awakened by the modern trumpets of war.

Before we enter upon these campaigns in the East it is well to survey the countries to be invaded, to review the battle lines and travel in these pages over the fighting ground.

The eastern theatre in the first six months of the war, from August 4, 1914, to February 1, 1915, includes the scenes of the fighting in the historic Balkans and in the Caucasus. But the eastern front proper is really that region where the Teutonic allies and the Russians opposed each other, forming a fighting line almost a thousand miles long. It stretches from rugged old Riga on the shores of the Baltic Sea in the far north, down through Poland to the Carpathian Mountains, touching the warm, sunlit hills on the Rumanian frontier. When the total losses of the Great War are finally counted it will probably be found that here the heaviest fighting has occurred.

This is the longest battle line in the world's history. Partly on account of its great length, and partly because of the nature of the country, we see the two gigantic forces in this region locked together in their deadly struggle, swaying back and forth, first one giving way, then the other. This was especially the case in the northern section, along the German-Russian frontier.

As we view the armies marshaling along this upper section, along the Baltic shore, southward, including part of East Prussia as well as Baltic Russia, we look upon the ancient abode of the Lithuanians, supposed to be the first of the Slavic tribes to appear in Europe. Hardly any part of Europe has a more forbidding aspect than this region. There the armies must pass over a flat, undulating country, almost as low in level as the Baltic, and therefore occupied in large part by marshes and lagoons through which they must struggle. In all parts the soil is unproductive. At one time it was a universal forest: thick, dark, and dank. A century ago, however, Catherine the Great distributed large areas of this comparatively worthless land among her favorites and courtiers. In this way a certain percentage was reclaimed, and with the incoming of the sunlight

THE WAR IN THE EAST—THE RELATION OF THE EASTERN COUNTRIES TO GERMANY

more favorable conditions for human life were established. Yet even now it is very thinly settled.

Through this region the armies must cross big rivers: the Oder, Dvina, Warthe, Vistula, Pregel, and Niemen, northward and northeastward. Just above or eastward of that point, where the German-Russian frontier touches the shore, the Baltic curls into a dent, 100 miles deep, forming the Gulf of Riga. Near the southern extremity of this gulf, eight miles from the mouth of the Dvina, is the city of Riga, ranking second only to Petrograd in commercial importance as a seaport, and with a population of about 300,000.

As the armies move across the frontier they come to a vast domain projecting into this marsh country, like a great, broad tongue licking the shore of the Baltic; this wide strip of German territory is East Prussia—a country to be beleaguered. Not far below the tip of this tongue, about five miles from the mouth of the Pregel River in the Frische Haff, and about twenty-five miles from the seacoast, is situated another embattled stronghold—the city of Königsberg which, since 1843, has been a fortress of the first rank. These two cities in the following pages will be the immediate objectives of the enemy forces operating on this section of the eastern front.

It will be obvious why the lines of battle were less permanently fixed here than in the more solid and mountainous sections of northern France. Railroads and fairly well-laid highways do indeed traverse these swamps in various parts, especially in German territory, but trenches could not be dug in yielding mire. In yet another feature were the military operations hampered by the nature of the terrain here; the use of heavy artillery.

We have seen that one of the chief causes of success attending German attacks in the other theatres of the war has been their use of heavy guns. But in the fighting before Riga, we shall see when the Germans seemed on the point of taking that city their heavy artillery was so handicapped that it was rendered practically useless. Being restricted by the marshes to an attack over a comparatively narrow front, they were compelled to leave their heavy guns behind on firmer soil. The guns which they could

take with them were matched by the Russians; the fighting was, therefore, almost entirely limited to infantry engagements, in which the Russians were not inferior to the Germans. Thus, we shall find the German advance on Riga was stopped before it could attain its object.

In studying the fighting in this part of the eastern front, it will be seen why the Germans were more successful below Riga, and why the Russians were compelled to evacuate Vilna. Here is a broad rise, something like the back of a half-submerged submarine, which seems to cross the country, where the land becomes more solid. The armies must move, instead of through marshes, along innumerable small lakes, most of the lakes being long and narrow and running north and south, with a fairly thick growth of timber among them, mostly pine and spruce and fir. In character this section is rather similar to parts of Minnesota. There are two cities to be conquered in this drier region, Dvinsk, and, further south, Vilna, once the chief city or capital of the Lithuanians. We shall see the Russians thrust back from Königsberg, and the heavy fighting shifted over to this section; yet even here, where the huge guns of the Germans could find footing, the terrain was not suited to trench warfare, and every arrival of reenforcements on either side would swing the lines back or forth.

In studying the military movements in a country of this character, special attention must be paid to the railway lines. Railways, and more especially those running parallel to the fronts, are absolutely necessary to success. In looking, therefore, for a key to the object of any particular movement, the first step must be a close study of this railroad situation.

We find from Riga to the fortress of Rovno there is a continuous line of railroad, running generally north and south and passing through Dvinsk, Vilna, Lida, Rovno, and thence down through Poland to Lemberg. Every effort of the Russian armies in the succeeding chapters will be made to keep to the westward of and parallel to this line, and for a very good reason.

Feeding into this great north and south artery are the branch lines from Petrograd to Dvinsk; from Moscow to the junction at

Baranovitschi; from Kiev to Sarny. Aside from these three important branch lines, there are a few other single-track offshoots, but from a military point of view they are of no importance.

This line was the main objective (short of capturing Riga itself) of the German operations. This line proves especially vital to the Russians, for nowhere east of it is there another such line which could be used for the same purpose.

If, in the campaigns to be described, this railroad falls into Russian hands, it gives every facility for strengthening or reenforcing any part of the Russian front where German pressure becomes excessive. It is, in addition, a solution to the difficult problem of transportation of supplies. To use a military term, it gives the Russian army a mobility not possessed by the enemy because of a lack of similar facilities.

But should this railroad be taken by the Germans, the advantage would immediately be reversed. And if once the Russian lines were driven back beyond the railroad, a division of their forces would be forced upon them; their armies would be obliged to group themselves beside the three east and west branches already mentioned, for only by these three systems could their forces be supplied, lateral communications being absolutely lacking. And this is the key to the fighting, not only in the northern section of the front, but all along the line, down to Galicia. Naturally, only the Russian railroads need be considered, for in the first months of the war the Germans are the invaders in the northern half of the eastern front, except for a few short periods in the beginning. Compared to the German railway lines near the frontier, the Russian lines are very few.

There are two distinct railway lines running from Germany into East Prussia, with innumerable branches leading to all points of the Russian frontier, laid especially for military purposes. It was along these that we shall witness the German forces rushed from Belgium to drive back the first Russian advance. But, of course, the moment the Germans enter Russian territory they have no advantage over the Russians, since even

their wonderful efficiency does not enable them to build railroads as fast as an army can advance. Hence, we observe their efforts to gain possession of the Russian railroads.

We come now to the central part of the eastern front. Here, just below East Prussia, Russian Poland projects into German territory in a great salient, about 200 miles wide and 250 long, resembling a huge bite in shape.

This land is a monotonous, wind-swept plain, slightly undulating, its higher parts not even 500 feet above sea level. To the northward and eastward it descends gradually into the still lower lands of East Prussia and White Russia, but in the south it lifts into the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains.

Gigantic armies are to move over this plateau, timbered in parts with oak, beech, and lime, and in some sections deeply cut by small rivers and streams forming fissures, some narrow and craggy, others broad and sloping with marshy bottoms. Toward the south the soldiers must cross narrow ravines in all directions, often covered with wild, thick undergrowth. The chief river is the Vistula, which enters by the southern boundary and flows first north, then northwest, skirting the plateau region at a height of 700 feet, finally making its exit near Thorn, thence on to the Baltic through East Prussia. Its valley divides the hilly tracts into two parts: Lublin heights in the east and the Sedomierz heights to the westward. Picture in your mind the great armies approaching these ridges, the most notable of which is the Holy Cross Mountains, rising peaks almost 2,000 feet above sea level.

The fighting forces in the northeast, where the plain slopes gradually into the Suwalki Province, must pass over a country dotted with lakes and lagoons, which farther on take on the character of marshes, stagnant ponds, peat bogs, with small streams flowing lazily from one to the other. Here and there are patches of stunted pine forests, with occasional stretches of fertile, cultivated soil. Throughout this section many rivers flow along broad, level valleys, separating into various branches which form many islands and, during the rainy seasons, flood the surrounding country.

Farther west the armies pass through broad valleys or basins, once the beds of great lakes, whose rich, alluvial soil give forth abundant crops of cereals. Here, too, flows the Niemen, 500 miles in length, watering a basin 40,000 square miles in area and separating Poland from Lithuania. It advances northward in a great, winding pathway, between limestone hills covered with loam or amid forests, its banks rising to high eminences in places, past ruined castles built in the Middle Ages. In the yellowish soil along its banks grow rich crops of oats, buckwheat, corn, and some rye. Naturally such a section would be thickly populated, not only on account of the fertile soil, but because the Niemen, like the Vistula, is one of the country's means of communication and transportation. As many as 90,000 men earn their livelihoods in navigating the steamers and freight barges passing up and down this great waterway. At Yurburg the Niemen enters East Prussia on its way to the Baltic.

CHAPTER XLII

THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF RUSSIAN POLAND

IT is in the southern part of Russian Poland, among the foothills of the Carpathians, that the armies come into possession of its mineral resources, a fact which will have some influence on the German military movements in this region. Up in the Kielce hills copper has been mined for 400 years, though the value of these mines has decreased on account of the much greater quantity found in America. A hundred years ago the Kielce mines produced nearly 4,000 tons of copper a year. Brown iron ore is also found here in deposits 40 per cent pure, while there are also veins of zinc sometimes 50 feet thick, yielding ore of 25 per cent purity. Sulphur, one of the ingredients for the manufacture of explosives, is found at Czarkowa in the district of Pinczow. In the southwest, in Bedzin and Olkuz, there are

coal deposits about 200 square miles in area. In the southern districts wheat is also grown in some abundance.

The military value of this country is further enhanced by political conditions. Like the greater part of Galicia to the southward, it is peopled by the Poles, who form one of the important branches of the great Slavic family. At one time Poland was a kingdom whose territory and possessions spread from the Carpathians up to the Baltic and far into the center of Russia, ruling its subject peoples with quite as much rigor as the Poles have themselves been ruled by Russia and Germany.

Poland is a seat of conquest in the Great War. For not much over a hundred years ago what remained of this old kingdom was divided among the three great powers: Prussia, Austria, and Russia. Austria, on the whole, has been much the best master. Germany tried in various ways to Germanize her subjects in German Poland, thereby rousing their bitter hatred. Russia was no less autocratic in attempting to extinguish the spirit of nationality among the Poles under her rule. But, naturally, the fact remains that between the Poles and the Russians there are still ties of blood. In moving westward, by this route Russia would be moving among a race who, in spite of all they had suffered at the hands of the Czar, still would naturally prefer Slav to Teuton.

We shall soon stand with the invading armies in the center of Russian Poland, and enter the great city of Warsaw. This conquered citadel with more than 400,000 inhabitants, is situated on the Vistula. It was, next to Paris, the most brilliant city of Europe in the early part of last century. But under Russian influence it became a provincial town in spirit, if not in size. It once had the character of prodigal splendor; within late years it became a forlorn, neglected city, not the least effort being made by the Russian authorities to modernize its appearance and improvement. From a sanitary point of view it became one of the least progressive cities of Europe. And yet, as the armies march into the capital, there are still signs of the city's past glory: over thirty palaces rear their lofty turrets above the tile roofs of the houses, among them the palace of the long-dead Polish kings.

However, from a military point of view, Warsaw maintained great importance in the Great War. It is at this time one of the strongest citadels of Europe, and around it lies the group of fortresses called the Polish Triangle. The southern apex is Ivangorod on the Vistula; the eastern, Brest-Litovsk; the northern being Warsaw itself. To the northwest lies the advanced fort of Novo Georgievsk. This triangle is a fortified region with three fronts: two toward Germany and one toward Austria, and the various forts are fully connected by means of railroads.

It would appear, therefore, that Russian Poland would offer excellent conditions for an army on the defensive. And this is quite true, the Vistula, especially, serving as a screen against the attacking armies from the west. As a matter of fact, it would have been extremely difficult to take Warsaw by a frontal attack. Warsaw's weakness lay in the north in the swamp regions.

One of the greatest dangers in all wars, against which a military commander has to guard his army, is that of being flanked. The road or roads leading from the rear to the base of supplies, along which not only food supplies for the soldiers, but, quite as important, ammunition, is brought up, either in wagons, automobiles, or in railroad trains, are the most sensitive part of an army's situation. Unless they are very short—that is, unless an army is very close to its base of supplies—it is impossible to guard these lines of communication adequately. Therefore, if the enemy is able to break through on either side of the front, there is great danger that he may swing his forces around and cut these lines of communication. The army that is thus deprived of its sources of supply has nothing left then but to surrender, sometimes even to inferior forces. Sometimes, of course, if the army is within the walls of a fortified city and is well supplied with food and ammunition, it may hold out and allow itself to be besieged. This may even be worth while, for the sake of diminishing the enemy's strength to the extent of the forces required for besieging, usually many times larger than the besieged force. But in the case of Warsaw we shall see that that would not have been a wise plan; hardly any food supply that could have been laid by would have maintained the large civil population, and

the big guns of the Germans would soon have battered down the city's defenses.

This the Russians realized from the very beginning. As is well known now, Russia had never intended to hold Poland against the Teutons. Her real line of defense was laid much farther back. It was only on account of the protest of France, when the two Governments entered into their alliance, that any fortifications at all were thrown up in Poland. A real line of defense must be more or less a straight line, with no break. And the marshes in the north, as well as the tongue of East Prussia projecting in along the shores of the Baltic toward Riga made that impossible. Russia's real line of defense was farther east, along the borders of Russia proper and along the line of railroad already referred to. By studying this territory east of Poland it will become obvious why Russia should prefer this as her main line of defense against a German invasion.

As we witness the armies moving along what was once the frontier between Poland and Russia proper we shall find the plain of Poland dips into a region which apparently was once a vast lake which drained into the Dnieper, but the outlet becoming choked, this stagnant water formed into those immense morasses known as the Pripet Marshes, forming over two-fifths of the whole province of Minsk and covering an area of over 600 square miles. Even when more than 6,000,000 acres have been reclaimed by drainage, the armies found some of these marshes extending continuously for over 200 miles. In the upper Pripet basin the woods were everywhere full of countless little channels which creep through a wilderness of sedge. Along the right bank of the Pripet River the land rises above the level of the water and is fairly thickly populated. Elsewhere extends a great intricate network of streams with endless fields of bulrushes and stunted woods. Over these bogs hang unhealthy vapors, and among the rank reeds there is no fly, nor mosquito, nor living soul or sound in the autumn.

Not even infantry could pass over this region—not to consider cavalry or artillery, save in the depth of a cold winter when the water and mire is frozen. Even then it would be impossible to

venture over the ice with heavy guns. An invading army must, therefore, split in two parts and pass around the sides, and nothing is more dangerous than splitting an army in the face of the enemy. It is behind these vast marshes that we shall find the Russians planned to make their first determined stand.

Here, too, the Russians expected to have the advantage of being surrounded by their own people, for this is the country of the White Russians, so called on account of their costumes. Here the purest Slavic type is preserved; they have not blended with other stocks, as the Great Russians with the Finns and the Little Russians, farther south, with the Mongols. For a while this territory was subject to the kings of Poland, who oppressed its inhabitants most barbarously, from the effects of which they have not even fully recovered. To-day White Russia is one of the poorest and most backward parts of the empire. And even yet the great bulk of the landlords are Poles.

CHAPTER XLIII

AUSTRIAN POLAND, GALICIA AND BUKOWINA

LET us now pass ahead of the armies into the southern section of the eastern front. Here we have to consider only Austrian Poland, Galicia and Bukowina, for here there is much less swaying back and forth, the Russians maintaining their lines much more steadily than farther north. This section is an undulating terrace which slopes down to the Vistula and the Dniester; behind rise the Carpathian ranges, forming the natural frontier between the broad, fertile plains of Hungary and Russia. Here the population is quite dense, there being 240 inhabitants to the square mile. Nearly half of the total area is in farm lands, about one-fourth woodland, and the rest mostly meadow and pasture, less than a quarter of one per cent being lake or swamp. Rich crops of barley, oats, rye, wheat, and corn are grown here, while

the mineral resources include coal, salt, and petroleum, the latter especially being important in modern warfare on account of the great quantities of fuel necessary for motor carriages.

Here, in Galicia, we shall witness the conquests of the important city of Lemberg — with its 160,000 population — fourth in size of all Austrian cities, only Vienna, Prague, and Triest being larger. Further in toward the mountains we shall see the storming of the strongly fortified city of Przemysl (pronounced Prshemisel), also important as the junction of the network of railroads that the Austrians had built throughout the country, including several lines passing over the Carpathians into Hungary. And farther west still we shall look upon the invasion of the old Polish city of Cracow, also strongly fortified. This section is especially rich in industries, mines, and agriculture.

Here, too, are staged many of the battles of the rivers—parallel with the mountain ranges flows the Dniester in a southeasterly direction, into which, flowing down from the north and running parallel with each other, empty the Gnila Lipa, the Zlota Lipa, and the Stripa, all of which figure prominently in the war movements, for each of these is crossed several times by both armies engaged at bloody costs.

As will be noted by reading the chapters on the fighting on the eastern front, here, as in East Prussia, the Russians make a determined advance and actually succeed in conquering this territory from the Austrians. At one time we find them even in possession of all except one of the chief passes in the Carpathians and threatening to overrun the plains of Hungary. To hold Russian Poland it was necessary that they should have a firm grip of East Prussia and Austrian Poland, thus protecting the flanks of their center. Had they been able to hold their grip, then they could have straightened out their entire line from north to south, and Warsaw would have been safe. But we shall see both their extremities driven back; therefore Warsaw was in danger, in spite of its fortifications.

That the Austrians should have allowed themselves to be thrust back over the Carpathians is one of the surprises of the early stages of the war. For these mountains are only second in

size in all Europe to the Alps themselves, forming the eastern wing of the great European mountain system. They are about 800 miles long and nearly 250 miles wide in parts. Some of the higher peaks reach 8,000 feet above sea level.

Imagine the vision of an army marching along the roads from the foothills to the mountains leading through mysterious, shadowy spruce forests, where the soil is covered with rich carpets of moss. Foaming streams ripple in among the moss-covered bowlders. Then the paths emerge on the cheerful, emerald-green pastures of the slopes, alive with the flocks of goats, sheep and cattle, attended by their shepherds. A little farther and the whole scenery changes, and the armies approach tremendous mountains of solid granite, ominously dark, shining like hammered iron, rising abruptly from the stone débris and black patches of mountain fir, and towering bluffs and crags seem to pierce the sky with their sharp peaks, bastions and jagged ridges, like gigantic fortresses. Clouds of white mist, driven and torn by gusts of wind, cling to the precipitous walls, and masses of eternal snow lie in the many fissures and depressions, forming large, sharply outlined streaks and patches.

The Magyars inhabit the great central plains of Hungary which constitutes ethnologically a vast island of Magyars in a sea of Slavs. The Carpathian slopes on the Hungarian side of the ranges, including the mounts of the Tatra—with the exception of the Zips district, which is peopled with German-Saxon colonists—are inhabited, in their western parts, by two million Slovaks, in the eastern parts by half a million Ruthenians or Little Russians, and on the Transylvanian side by nearly three million Rumanians. The border lines between these Rumanians and the Magyars and between the Hungaro-Slav groups (Slovaks and Ruthenians) and the Magyars lie far down within the borders of the great central Hungarian plains. This line at one point extends to within a few miles of the Hungarian capital of Bupapest.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE BALKANS—COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

THIS survey of the fighting ground in eastern Europe brings us now to the "cockpit of the war." From a military point of view, as well as from the political, the Balkan theatre is of equal importance with other big fronts in Europe. It is the gateway to the Orient for central Europe. Here the armies engaged are numbered only by the hundred thousands, none reach a million. But from the point of view of human interest and political intrigue it is by far the most picturesque. Here the hatred between the combatants is most bitter; indeed so bitter that when it burst into flame a mad whirlwind of passion swept over half the world. For here the great conflagration began.

A map of the Balkan Peninsula is almost, on the face of it, a full explanation of the causes of the war. The military campaigns, studied in connection with their physical environment, explain all the diplomatic intrigues of the past fifty years, for they are the intrigues themselves translated into action.

Geographically speaking, the Balkan nations are those situated in the big peninsula of southern Europe which lies below the Danube River and the northern border of Montenegro. Some authorities, however, include Rumania, and others even bring in Austria's Slavic provinces, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The most noticeable feature of this vast war-ridden region is its mountains. Those same Carpathian Mountains, which form the natural boundary between the land of the Magyars and the Russian plains, take a sudden turn westward at the Rumanian frontier, then sweep around in a great semicircle, forming a shape resembling a scythe, the handle of which reaches up into Poland, the blade curling around within the Balkan Peninsula. Behind the handle, and above the upper part of the blade, stretch the broad plains of Hungary, through which flows the great Danube, the largest river in Europe next to the Russian Volga—a river which flowed with blood during the Great

War. Just in the middle of the back of the blade this great river bursts through the mountain chain, swirling through the famous Iron Gate into the great basin within the curved blade. On the south of its farther course to the Black Sea lie the plains of northern Bulgaria.

The curving chain of mountains below the Iron Gate is the Balkan Range. But excepting for the plains of Thrace, lying south of the Balkans, over toward the Black Sea and above Constantinople, the rest of the peninsula is almost entirely one confused tangle of craggy mountains, interspersed throughout with small, fertile valleys and plateaus. This roughness of surface becomes especially aggravated as one passes westward, and over toward the Adriatic coast, from Greece up into the Austrian province of Dalmatia, the country is almost inaccessible to ordinary travelers.

What is the political value of this beleaguered domain? The broad, significant fact is that any road from western Europe to the Orient must pass through the Balkan Peninsula, and that these mountains almost block that road. From north to south there is just one highway, so narrow that it is really a defile.

This road stretches from the seat of the war at Belgrade on the Danube down a narrow valley, the Morava, thence through the highlands of Macedonia into the Vardar Valley to Saloniki, on the Ægean Sea. At Nish, above Macedonia, another road branches off into Bulgaria across the plains of Thrace and into Constantinople. This was the road by which the Crusaders swarmed down to conquer the Holy Land. This was the road by which, hundreds of years later, the Moslems swarmed up into the plains of Hungary and overran the south of Europe, until they were finally checked outside the gates of Vienna. Nothing is more significant of the terror that these marching hosts inspired than the fact that, with the exception of a few larger towns, the villages hid themselves away from this highway in the hills.

Bear clearly in mind that in the existence of this narrow way to the Orient lies the key not only to the causes of the war,

but to the military campaigns that we shall follow in this region. For it is the Teutons who would in the Great War, like the Crusaders of old, pass down this highway and again conquer the East, though in this case their object is trade, and not the Holy Sepulcher.

To secure the pathway through this strategic country it also is necessary to have control of the territory on all sides, and this is quite as true in a political as in a military sense. To secure their pathway up into Europe the Turks once conquered all the peoples in the Balkans, except those inhabiting the mountains over on the Adriatic: the Montenegrins and a small city called Ragusa, just above Montenegro in Dalmatia. It is not at all peculiar that just here, in almost the same locality, the Teutons should meet with the first and strongest resistance.

A study of the territory in which the first fighting of the war occurred will explain the foregoing calculations. It will be observed that Austrian territory runs down past the eastward turn in the Danube, along the frontier of Montenegro, until it narrows gradually into a tip at Cattaro, just below Cettinje, the Montenegrin capital. This land is composed of the three provinces of Bosnia, Herzegovina and Dalmatia. All this territory is inhabited by the same race that peoples Serbia and Montenegro—the Serbs. In fact, the Slavic population reaches up all along the coast to Trieste, and even a little beyond. For this reason it is in this direction that we shall see the Serbians and the Montenegrins invade Austrian territory, after their initial success in repulsing the Austrian invasion.

The objectives of the brief campaign soon to be considered were Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, and Ragusa, the famous little seaport on the Adriatic. Ragusa is of especial interest on account of its remarkable history. In the Middle Ages it was the most important seaport in that part of the world. Its ships sailed over all the Mediterranean and from them is derived the word "argosy," signifying a ship laden with wealth. Again and again the Turks attempted to conquer this little state, which was at that time a republic, but always the Ragusans beat off the enemy. For the country about is so rocky, so rough, that

the city was easily defended, especially in that time when nearly all fighting was hand to hand.

The first and foremost word in the Great War—the key word—is Sarajevo. Here is the scene of the assassination of the Crown Prince of Austria, which was at least the final cause of the war. As we enter it we find a population of about forty thousand, half of which are Mohammedans. It is a large, straggling town, situated in a narrowing valley overtopped by steep hills on either side, which close in a narrow gorge in the east and broaden into a plain on the west. It was to the eastward, however, that we shall find the heavy fighting along the Austro-Serbian frontier.

The armies along the Danube will soon command our attention. As they follow the river toward Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, it is no longer the "Blue Danube" of the famous German song. Here, in fact, it is a broad, mud-colored river, dotted with a number of low islands along its center. Belgrade, where the first shots of the war were fired, is located on rather high ground, backed by a semicircle of low hills in its rear. But opposite all is flat and, in places, marshy. Modern guns could, of course, keep up an effective fire across the river at this point, as in fact they did before the actual invasion of Serbia began, but the conditions for a crossing are not favorable. It was from the west, from the Bosnian side, that the actual attack was made.

Just below Belgrade the river Save, shallower and narrower, empties into the Danube, forming the frontier westward, past Shabatz, to Ratcha, where the Drina, flowing down from the Macedonian highlands northward, joins it, forming the western frontier between Bosnia and Serbia.

The Drina, where much fighting occurs, is no ordinary waterway, no mere mountain stream, though it lies in a mountainous country. Before reaching its junction with the Save it is fed by many important tributaries. Ever swift, often torrential, it has washed out a bed of imposing width, and by a constant cutting out of new courses has created a series of deltas. It was one of the largest of these islands, that of Kuriachista, between Losnitza and Leschnitza, that the Austrians chose as a base

for their first invasion. From this point up and around to Shabatz lies the bloody field of the Austro-Serbian battles.

A description of this section, in brief at least, is necessary to an understanding of the three Austrian invasions made here, and all three of which failed disastrously. North and west of Shabatz lies the great plain of Matchva, bounded on its east and north by the Save and by the Drina on the west. It is a rich, fertile land, but much broken up by woodland. To the southeast a rolling valley is divided by the River Dobrava, while due south the Tzer Mountains rise like a camel's back out of the plain and stretch right across from the Drina to the Dobrava. The southern slopes of Tzer are less abrupt than those on the north and descend gradually into the Leschnitza Valley, out of which rise the lesser heights of the Iverak Mountains. Both these ranges are largely covered by prune orchards, intersected with some sparse timber.

This is a region of natural fortifications. Descending southward again, the foothills of Iverak are lost in a chain of summits, which flank the right bank of the Jadar River, that tributary of the Drina River from which the first big battle takes its name.

From the left bank of the Jadar, from its junction with the Drina to Jarebitze, a great rolling level stretches south until the high Guchevo Mountains, stretching in southeasterly direction, rise abruptly and hide the Bosnian hills from view. From there, southward, the country is extremely mountainous, even the highways being blasted out of the sides of the precipitous mountains along the innumerable ravines through which run watercourses which, though almost dry in summer, burst into torrential streams after the snows begin to melt in the higher altitudes.

Naturally in such a country roads are of prime importance in military operations. A few built and maintained by the state are in excellent condition and practicable in all sorts of weather. But for the rest communications consist of bridle paths and trails over the mountains.

As has been stated, the great highway from Belgrade to Saloníki is the key to all military operations in the Balkans; nor is this case any exception. A study of the map will show how

this big, underlying fact entered into the plans of the first three attempts at invading Serbia. Naturally, had facilities been convenient at Belgrade, that would have been the point from which to advance. The next possible point was over the Drina, because it was not so wide or so deep.

Bosnia and Herzegovina at the beginning of the war were sparsely served by railroads. But for the purpose of an invasion of Serbia the lines running to Tuzla in the north and to Vishegrade and Uvatz in the south were of much strategic importance. Moreover, unlike the Hungarian plain opposite Belgrade, the country is so mountainous and well wooded that great bodies of troops could be moved about without being observed. We now come to the main reason why this point was chosen, next to Belgrade. Though we shall see that they did not reach it at their first attempt, there is no doubt that the main objective of the Austrians was the little town of Valievo, lying some distance back from the Jadar and the field of battle. For at Valievo is the terminus of a light railway which joins with the main line running from Belgrade down to Saloniki. The Teutons were in a hurry to open this highway, for it meant opening a means of communication with the Turks, who were to become, and later did become, their active allies. These are political matters of significance here insomuch as they explain the special importance of the railway from Belgrade south along the ancient highway of the Crusaders.

Before following this route farther south, a few words should be devoted to Montenegro. Between Serbia and Montenegro lies the Sanjak of Novibazar. This small territory nominally belonged to Turkey before the Balkan War, but it was in fact garrisoned by Austrian troops, the civil administration being left to the Turks. Austria had gone to special trouble to establish this arrangement, so that it might have a wedge between the territories of the two little Serb nations. Anticipating this war long ago, Austria had counted on having a large enough force in Novibazar to prevent a union of the two armies. But, when it actually came, she was in no position to prevent it, so much of her strength being required to meet the Russians.

Montenegro is the natural refuge of the Serbs. Whenever in the past they were especially hard pressed by the Turks, they would flee to the mountain fastnesses of Tzherna Gora, the Black Mountain, for here military operations, even in this day of modern artillery, are absolutely impossible, and when it came to mountain guerrilla fighting, the Turks were no match for the Serbs. Thus it was that the Serbs were able to preserve their old traditions, their language and the best blood of their race. And it may be said that to a slightly lesser extent Ragusa served the same purpose.

The Montenegrins are born fighters and die fighters. From one end to the other Montenegro is one wilderness of mountain crags and towering precipices, traversed only by foot trails. Here and there a shelf of level soil may be found, just enough to enable people to grow their own necessities. The capital of this rocky domain, high up among the crags and overlooking the Adriatic, is Cettinje, which was to be stormed and conquered by the Teutons. The main street, about 150 yards long, comprising two-thirds of the town, is so broad that three or four carriages may be driven abreast down the length of it. It is composed entirely of one and two story cottages. A few short streets branch off at right angles, and in these is all of Cettinje that is not comprised in the main street. The king inhabited a modest-looking, brown edifice with a small garden attached. Overlooking the capital is Mt. Lovcen, on top of which the Montenegrins planted guns to defend any attack that might be made against them.

South of Montenegro and north of Greece lies another country of instinctive fighters. It is similar in physical aspect, but very different in its population. This is the land of the Albanians, whom the Turks conquered by force of arms, like all the rest of the Balkan peninsula. They are a distinct race by themselves; it is supposed that they are the descendants of the ancient Illyrians, those wild tribes of whom the ancient Greeks wrote. Nor is this unlikely, for in such a country as theirs the inhabitants are most likely to remain pure from generation to generation.

Returning for a few moments to Belgrade, we now may resume

our course down the ancient highway toward Saloniki. Down the Morava Valley passes the railroad, after which it passes within a few miles of the Bulgarian frontier, near Kustendil; dangerously near the frontier of a possible enemy, but especially perilous in this war in which the Serbians would naturally endeavor to retreat toward her ally, Greece.

Just below Vranya the railroad enters what was, before the two Balkan Wars, the Turkish territory of Macedonia. This region down to within sixty miles of Saloniki was reconquered from the Turks by the Serbs, having been Serb inhabited since early in the Christian era as shown by historical record. As early as 950 Constantin Porphyrogenitus writes of its inhabitants as Serbs, from whom, he says, the town of Serbia on the Bistritza River near Saloniki took its name. Throughout this region there are so many mountain ranges that it would be impossible to name them all. Nowhere has blood been more continuously shed than here, and nowhere in Europe is the scenery more beautiful.

Especially impressive is that section around Monastir, toward the frontier of Albania and away from the main line of the railroad. Here, not more than a day's walk from the city of Monastir, or Bitolia, as its Slavic inhabitants call it, is Lake Prespa, a small sheet of crystal-clear water in which are reflected the peaks and the rugged crags of the surrounding mountains. Through a subterranean passage the waters of this mountain lake pass under the range that separates it from the much larger lake, Ochrida, the source of the bloody Drina.

The people of these mountains are Serbs, almost to Saloniki. Uskub, whose ancient Serb name is Skoplya, was the old Serb capital, and there the Serb ruler Doushan was crowned emperor in 1346.

For the past five hundred years these Macedonians have been used to all the ways of guerrilla fighting. Roaming through their mountains in small bands they have harassed the Turkish soldiers continuously.

The Bulgarian ruler Ferdinand had through many years by means of committees and church jugglery striven to Bulgarize this population, preparatory to the contemplated seizure of the

territory which he has now been able with the help of the Germanic powers to accomplish. But in reality the Bulgar population in what was European Turkey was found only eastward of the Struma in Thracia including Adrianople. Those regions formed the ample and legitimate field of ambition for the unification of the Bulgars.

When hostilities broke out in 1914, when Serbia was defending herself against the Austrians, King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, the secret ally by treaty of Austria, did everything possible to forward his designs against the Serbs and sent armed Bulgar bands into Serb Macedonia.

Shortly below the city of Monastir in the west begins the Greek frontier, running over eastward to Doiran, where it touches the Bulgarian frontier. Here the railroad, coming down along the Vardar River, emerges into the swamp lands and over them passes into the city of Saloniki.

Here is the old territory of Philip of Macedon, the father of the conqueror. For some forty or fifty miles these swamps stretch out from Saloniki, overshadowed by Mt. Olympus on their southern edge. While not quite so extensive as the Pinsk Swamps, they are quite as impassable, from a military point of view. In the center of this region of bulrushes and stunted forests is an open sheet of shallow water, Lake Enedjee.

Nearly all this swamp land is submerged, but here and there are small islands. For some years the Turkish soldiers garrisoned these islands during the mild winter months, living on them in rush huts. In the summer they would withdraw into the near-by foothills. But one summer several hundred Comitajis descended into the swamps and took possession.

The stunted forests and the bulrushes here are traversed by a maze of narrow waterways, just wide enough for a punt to pass along. When the soldiers returned in the fall, they started out for their islands in strings of punts. Presently they were met by volleys of bullets that seemed to come from all directions out of the bulrushes. Some, in their panic, leaped out into the shallow water and sunk in the mire. The rest retired.

For years the Turkish soldiers attempted to drive the

Comitajis out of the swamp. First they surrounded it, watching all possible landing places, but the outlaws had supplies smuggled in to them by the peasants. Then the Turks began bombarding with heavy cannon, which, of course, was futile, since they could not distinguish the points at which they were firing. And finally they gave up molesting the Comitajis, who continued making the swamps their headquarters until the Young Turks came into power. Then, believing that a constitutional Macedonia was finally to be granted them, all the Comitajis laid down their arms.

It is a peculiar fact that Saloniki, one of the largest cities on the peninsula, with a population considerably over a hundred thousand, should represent none of the national elements of the country. For though Bulgars, Turks, Greeks, and Serbs may be found there, an overwhelming majority, nearly 90,000 of the people, are Spanish Jews.

Walking along the streets, it would be easy to imagine oneself in Spain or in Mexico; on all sides the shouts of peddlers, the cries of cabmen, the conversation of pedestrians, are in Spanish. With a knowledge of that language the stranger may make his way about as easily as in his own native country. These are the descendants of the Jews who were driven out of Spain by Torquemada and his Spanish Inquisition and were so hospitably received by the Sultan of Turkey.

Saloniki, where we shall witness severe battles, is situated at the head of the gulf by the same name, an inlet of the Ægean Sea. It is a well-fortified city, built on the water's edge, but surrounding it is high land commanding the surrounding country. Added to that, the swamp region is another protection from an enemy coming from inland. Its seaward forts, however, are, or were, obsolete and would probably crumble before the fire of modern naval guns.

Stretching down the eastern shore of the Gulf is a peninsula on which is the famous Mt. Athos, that very peculiar community of celibate monks. Here, in the Holy Mountain, as the Slavs call it, there are monasteries representing all the various denominations of the Greek Orthodox Church: Greek, Bulgarian,

Serbian, and Russian, each swarming with hundreds of monks, who pass their time in idleness. Not only are women forbidden to enter this domain, but even female dogs or cats are kept out.

Across this upper end of the Ægean, from Mt. Athos, is the Bulgarian port, Dedeagatch, to which runs a branch of the main railway from Sofia to Constantinople. The country here is low and swampy, the port itself being little more than a boat landing.

Just below this point, across the Gulf of Saros, is the peninsula of Gallipoli, where a critical phase of the war was fought. It is somewhat like the blade of a scimitar, covering the entrance to the Sea of Marmora. Between this strip of land and the coast of Asia Minor is a narrow strait, the outer mouth of which is called the Dardanelles, the inner gateway being the famous Hellespont. Here it was that Xerxes crossed over on a bridge of boats at the head of his Persian army to invade Greece, only to meet disaster at Thermopylæ, and here Alexander of Macedonia crossed over to begin his march of conquest which was to extend his power as far as India. And about this narrow strait is centered the ancient Greek myth about Hero and Leander, which inspired Byron to swim across from Asia to Europe.

How well the Turks have fortified this approach to their capital is well enough indicated in the story of the operations of the allied fleets in their attempt to force the passage.

From the Hellespont to Constantinople is a sail of forty miles, along a coast steep and rugged, destitute of any harbor or even a beach where a boat might land. Nor is there a more beautiful sight than that which is presented on approaching the Turkish capital from this direction, especially of an early morning. Against the dawn in the East are silhouetted the minarets and domes and the palace roofs of the city; then, as the light increases, the white buildings are distinguished more clearly through a purple mist that rises from the waters, until the ship enters the Bosphorus, gliding past the shipping and the boat traffic along the shore of the harbor. The beauties of the Bosphorus have been described in every book of travel that has ever included this section of the world in its descriptions: it is un-

doubtedly the most beautiful waterway that may be found in any country.

Emerging into the Black Sea from the Bosphorus, one strikes the Bulgarian coast not far above that neck of land on which Constantinople is built. Along this stretch of coast up to the mouth of the Danube there are two harbors, Varna and Burgas. Each is terminus of a branch railroad leading off from the Nish-Sofia-Constantinople line. Behind Burgas lie the level tracts of Eastern Rumelia, or Thrace, as that part of the country is still called. But Varna is above the point where the Balkan Range strikes the coast, all of which is steep and rocky.

Above Varna begins the Delta of the Danube, up which steamers and heavily laden barges sail continuously, but here also begins the neutral territory of Rumania, the Dobruja, the richest section of the Danube basin, which was ceded to Rumania by Bulgaria after the Second Balkan War.

CHAPTER XLV

THE CAUCASUS—THE BARRED DOOR

WE now come to that section of the eastern theatre of the war which received the least extended notice in printed reports—the barred doorway between Europe and Asia—the Caucasus. Not because the fighting there was less furious, but because the region was less accessible to war correspondents. The struggle was in fact quite as bloody and even more savage and barbarous here than elsewhere, for on this front Russ meets Turk, Christian meets Moslem, and where they grapple the veneer of chivalry blisters off.

Here again, as in Galicia, we come to a natural frontier, not only between two races, but between two continents. For here, crossing the isthmus between the Black Sea and the Caspian, stretches a mountain range over seven hundred miles in length, rising abruptly out of the plains on either side. These are the

Caucasus Mountains, forming the boundary between Europe and Asia.

The higher and central part of the range (which averages only from sixty to seventy miles in width) is formed of parallel ridges, not separated by deep and wide valleys, but remarkably connected by elevated plateaus, which are traversed by narrow fissures of extreme depth. The highest peaks are in the most central chain; Mt. Elburz, attaining an elevation of 18,000 feet above the sea, while Mt. Kasbeck reaches a height of more than 16,000 feet, and several other peaks rise above the line of perpetual snow. The outlying spurs and foothills of this chain of lofty mountains are of less extent and importance than those of almost any other mountain range of similar magnitude, subsiding, as they do, until they are only 200 feet high along the shores of the Black Sea. Some parts are almost entirely bare, but other parts are densely wooded and the secondary ranges near the Black Sea are covered by magnificent forests of oak, beech, ash, maple, and walnut.

This range is an almost impassable wall across the narrow isthmus which joins Europe and Asia, and the Gorge of Dariel is the gateway in this wall through which have come almost all the migrating races that have peopled the continent of Europe. As is well known, the white peoples of Europe have been classified as the Caucasian race, because they were all supposed to have passed through this gateway originally. Apparently each of these oncoming waves of barbaric humanity, bursting through the great gateway, must have left behind some few remnants of their volume, for nowhere in the world, in so limited an area, is there such a diversity and mixture of peoples. In the words of one writer, who speaks with authority on this region, the Caucasus is "an ethnological museum where the invaders of Europe, as they traveled westward to be manufactured into nations, left behind samples of themselves in their raw condition."

Here may be found the Georgians, who so long championed the Cross against the Crescent, the wild Lesghians from the highlands of Daghestan; the Circassians, famed for the beauty of their women; Suanetians, Ossets, Abkhasians, Mingrelians, not

to enumerate dozens of other tribes and races, each speaking its own tongue. It is said that over a hundred languages are spoken throughout this region; seventy in the city of Tiflis alone.

The scenery of the mountains themselves is unparalleled in grandeur except by the Himalayas and offers many a virgin peak to the ambitious mountain climber. Here may be found the ibex, the stag, the wild boar, the wild bull and an infinite variety of feathered game. The animal life of the mountains has, in fact, become more abundant of late years on account of the high charges for hunting licenses fixed by the Russian Government. Wolves are so plentiful that in severe winters they descend to the lowlands in great packs and rob the flocks before the very eyes of the shepherds.

The most important mineral resources of the region are the oil wells; here, in fact, around Batum, are situated some of the most important oil fields in the world. Of manganese ore, an essential of the steel industry, the Caucasus furnishes half of the world's supply, which is exported from the two ports of Poti and Batum. Its mineral wealth seems to be practically unlimited, copper, zinc, iron, tin, and many other metals being found throughout the region, in most cases in exceedingly rich deposits. The agricultural resources are not so important, especially from a military point of view, though vast quantities of sheep are raised in the highlands in the spring and summer, the flocks being driven down into the plains to the south in winter.

One of the outstanding features of Russian occupation is the great Georgian military road which has been built across the mountains of recent years and maintained by the Government. Its engineering is masterly; here and there it passes close to or under vast overhanging lumps of mountainside. Everywhere the greatest care has been taken of this most important military highway, Russia's avenue into that country she coveted and fought for so long. Beginning at Vladikavkaz, it runs through Balta, Lars, thence through the famous Gorge of Dariel, the "Circassian Gates," the dark and awful defile between Europe and Asia. The gorge is what the geologists call a "fault," for it is not really a pass over the mountain chain, but a rent clear across

it. Seventy years ago it was almost impassable for avalanches or the sudden outbursts of pent-up glacial streams swept it from end to end, but the Russians have spent over $20,000,000 on it and made it safe. In 1877, during the Russo-Turkish War, nearly all the troops and stores for carrying the war into Turkey and Asia came by this road.

Its importance has since been lessened to a certain degree, for there is now direct railway communication from Moscow to Baku, at one end of the Trans-Caucasian Railway, and therefore to Kars itself, via Tiflis; and equally from Batum to Kars at the other end to which military steamers can bring troops and supplies from Odessa and Novorossik in the Black Sea.

The most important city in this region is Tiflis, the "city of seventy languages." It may, indeed, be called the modern Babel. As seen from the mountains, it lies at the bottom of a brown, treeless valley, between steep hills, on either side of the River Kura.

It is a point of great importance to modern Russia. It forms, to begin with, the end of the great military road across the mountains which, in spite of the railways, is still the quickest way to Europe for an army as well as for travelers, and all the mails come over it by express coaches. From Tiflis a railway runs to Kars, a strong frontier on the Persian frontier.

Tiflis has been much developed under the Russian Government. In the modern section of the city the streets are wide and paved and lighted by electricity and the stores are large and handsome while electric railways run in all directions. In the older parts of the city, however, the houses remain as they were built centuries ago, divided out into the many quarters devoted to the residences of the many races and nationalities that compose the population of Tiflis. Between most of them is bitter enmity and prejudice, even among those of the two great religious faiths, Christians and Mohammedans. It is this diversity of interests, which extends throughout all the section down into Persia, which has so complicated the situation on this front. For not only are the two military forces fighting here, but wherever governmental authority is momentarily relaxed, there these mutual animosities

flare up into active expression and the most barbarous features of warfare take place, such as the massacres of the Armenians by the Mohammedans. Neither Turkey nor Russia has been especially eager to suppress these bitter feuds, even in time of peace. In time of war there is nothing to restrain them, and the whole region is swept by carnage infinitely more hideous than legitimate warfare.

We have now passed over the entire theatre of the battles on the Eastern frontiers of the war in Europe. The battle grounds are familiar to us. In the succeeding chapters we will follow the armies over this war-ridden dominion and watch the battle lines as they move through the war to its decisive conclusion.

PART IV—THE AUSTRO-SERBIAN CAMPAIGN

CHAPTER XLVI

SERBIA'S SITUATION AND RESOURCES

THE first great campaign on the southeastern battle grounds of the Great War began on July 27, 1914, when the Austrian troops undertook their first invasion of Serbia. They crossed the Serbian border at Mitrovitza, about fifty miles northwest of Belgrade, driving the Serbians before them. The first real hostilities of the war opened with the bombardment of Belgrade by the Austrians on July 29, 1914—six days before the beginning of the campaigns on the western battle fields.

We are now familiar with the theatre of war as described in the preceding chapters, and will now follow the first Austrian armies into Serbia.

A stubborn fight excites the admiration of all observers, regardless of the moral qualities of the combatants. So, wherever our sympathies may lie, considering the war as a whole, there can be no doubt that the defense which the Serbians made against the first efforts of the Austrians to invade their country will stand out in the early history of the war as one of the most brilliant episodes of that period of the general struggle. Like a mighty tidal wave from the ocean the Austrian hosts swept over the Serbian frontier in three furious successive onslaughts, only to be beaten back each time. Naturally, there were material and moral causes, aside from the mere valor of the Serbians, which combined to create this disaster for the Austrian forces, but enough of the human element enters into the military

activities of these campaigns to make them easily the most picturesque of the early period of the war.

Before entering into a description of the actual events in 1914, it is well to consider the forces engaged. From a material point of view the Serbians entered into these campaigns greatly handicapped. They had lately been through two wars. In the First Balkan War they had not, it is true, been severely tested; the weight of the fighting had been borne by the Bulgarians in Thrace. The real test, and the great losses, came only with the second war, when the Serbian army threw every fiber of its strength against the Bulgarians in the Battle of the Bregalnitza, one of the most stubborn struggles in military history. The result was a Serbian victory, but it was very far from being a decisive and conclusive victory. The Bulgarians were forced back some fifteen miles into their own territory, but had it not been for the intervention of Rumania there can be no doubt that the Serbs would have entered Sofia. Here it was that the Serbians lost 7,000 killed and 30,000 wounded of their best men, as against 5,000 killed and 18,000 wounded in the whole war with Turkey; a total loss that was bound to be felt a few months later when the struggle was to be against so powerful an adversary as Austria-Hungary. The two previous wars had, without exaggeration, deprived the Serbian fighting forces of one-tenth their number—a tenth that was of the very best of first-line troops.

Added to this was another serious handicap, possibly even more serious. Serbia had, indeed, emerged victorious from the two wars, with a large stretch of conquered territory at her backdoor. But this acquired territory, practically all of Macedonia that had not gone to Greece, was peopled by Serbs. For twenty-five years these Macedonians had been organized into revolutionary fighting bands, the "Macedonian Committee" for the liberation of Macedonia and Albania from the Turks, and had struggled, not only against the Turks, but against foreign armed bands of propagandists. Some eight years subsequently to the foundation of the Macedonian Committee of native origin, the Bulgars founded in 1893 their committee which was called the Macedo-

PICTORIAL MAP OF THE BALKANS

Adrianople Committee. During the First Balkan War these experienced guerrilla fighters were valuable allies to the Serbian forces operating against the Turks.

But even before the First Balkan War the Serbians had very distinctly given the Macedonians to understand that they were to remain Serbian subjects. This action on their part had had not a little to do with rousing the Bulgarians to precipitate the Second Balkan War. And when finally Serbia conquered all this territory, confirmed to her down to Doiran by the treaty of Bucharest, King Ferdinand of Bulgaria began at once a fiery anti-Serb propaganda throughout the world, and took measures through provocatory agents and Bulgar bands crossing from Bulgaria into Macedonia to create disturbances.

When the Great War broke out in July, 1914, this Bulgarian activity in Serb Macedonia grew more intense. Thus it was that when the Austrians attacked the Serbians on their front the Serbians had still to detach enough of their forces to guard the Serbo-Bulgar border to prevent the crossing into Serb Macedonia of Bulgar bands. And added to this was the danger from Bulgaria herself. The Serbians knew that the opportune moment had only to come and Bulgaria, too, would hurl herself on the Serbian eastern flank. Thus another large percentage of the Serbian fighting forces had also to be stationed along the Bulgarian frontier to guard against possible attack from that quarter.

Offsetting these handicaps, however, and more than equalizing them, was the moral strength of the Serbian fighting units. They had just emerged through two victorious wars; they had triumphed so completely that there was small wonder if the Serbian farmers had come to believe themselves invincible and their leaders infallible. Practically every man in the Serbian army was a seasoned veteran; he had had not only his baptism of fire, but he had been through some of the bloodiest battles of modern times. He had got over his first fright; he was in that state of mind where danger and bloodshed no longer inspired either fear or horror. And even the warlike savage trembles on entering his first battle. Finally, he was now de-

fending his country, his home, his very fireside and his family against foreign invasion. And it is generally admitted that a man fighting in that situation is equal to two invaders, all other things being equal.

The Serb army opposing the Austrian invasions was composed of ten divisions of the First Ban and five divisions of the Second Ban. Five of the divisions of the First Ban and the five of the Second came from the kingdom as it was prior to the two Balkan wars, but the second five divisions of the First Ban were new creations recruited from Serb Macedonia.

The principles on which the organization of the Serbian army was based were very simple. The former kingdom was divided into five territorial divisional districts—Nish, Valievo, Belgrade, Kragujevatz, and Zaitchar. Each of these territorial divisional districts was subdivided into four regimental recruiting districts, each of which provided one infantry regiment of four battalions and one depot battalion. The battalion numbered about a thousand men, so that the war strength of the divisional infantry amounted to about 16,000 men. Attached to each division was a regiment of artillery, consisting of three groups of three 6-gun batteries; in all, 54 guns. The divisional cavalry, existing only in war time, consisted of a regiment of four squadrons, from men and horses previously registered. To each division was also attached its own technical and administrative units, engineers, and supply column, and its total strength amounted to 23,000 officers and men of first-line troops.

In addition to these five divisions of the First Ban, there was also a regiment of mountain artillery, made up of six batteries, six howitzer batteries and two battalions of fortress artillery. Then there was a separate cavalry division composed of two brigades, each of two regiments. Its war strength was 80 officers and 3,200 men. Attached to the cavalry division were two horse artillery batteries, of eight guns each. All told, this first-line army numbered about 200,000, with about 5,200 sabers and 330 guns.

The Second Ban, or reserve, much inferior in armament to the first line, brought the strength up to about 280,000 men.

SERBIAN AND AUSTRIAN INVASIONS

But this figure is probably an underestimate. Volunteers were enrolled in immense numbers. Some of them were men who had been exempted in the first conscription; others were Serbs from Austrian territory. The United States sent back thousands of Austrian and Macedonian Serbs who had emigrated there. It is probable, therefore, that the total strength of the Serbian forces shortly after the war broke out was at least 280,000, if not a trifle more. To this must be added the Montenegrin army which, though operating in a separate field, contributed its share in driving the Austrians back; another 40,000 men of first-class fighting ability and experience.

Finally, there was the third reserve, another 50,000 men, but they could be used for fighting only in the gravest emergency.

The infantry of the First Ban was armed with excellent Mauser rifles, caliber 7 mm., model 1899. The Second Ban carried a Mauser, the old single loader, to which a magazine was fitted in the Serbian arsenals; while the Third Ban had the old single-loader Berdan rifle. The machine gun carried was the Maxim, of the same caliber as the new Mauser.

In artillery the Serbians were perhaps not so well off. Their cannons had seen a great deal of service in the Balkan wars, and the larger a piece of artillery the more limited is the number of rounds it can fire. It is extremely doubtful that there had been time to replace many of these worn-out pieces.

The field gun was of French make; it was a 3-inch quick firer with a maximum range for shrapnel of 6,000 yards, a little over 3½ miles. The Second Ban was armed with old De Bange guns of 8 cm. caliber. The heavy guns, which had done much service outside Adrianople, were of Creuzot make, and included 24 howitzers of 15 cm. and some mortars of 24 cm. As for the aviation wing, there was none.

The Serbian army was under the superior command of the Chief of the General Staff, Voivode (Field Marshal) Putnik. Unlike his younger colleagues, his military education was entirely a home product; he had never studied abroad. His father was one of those Serbs born on Austrian soil; he had emigrated from Hungary to Serbia in the early forties where he had fol-

lowed the vocation of school-teacher. In 1847 the future general was born. After passing through the elementary schools, young Putnik entered the military academy at Belgrade. He had already attained a commission when the war of 1876 with Turkey broke out, through which he served as a captain of infantry. His next experience was in the unfortunate war with Bulgaria, in 1885, in which the Serbians were beaten after a three days' battle. At the outbreak of the war with Turkey, in 1912, General Putnik was made head of the army and received the grade of voivode (field marshal), being the first Serbian to enjoy that distinction. The grade of field marshal was created in the Serbian army during the First Balkan War.

With him worked Colonel Pavlovitch, the son of a farmer, who had won a series of scholarships, enabling him to study in Berlin. He had directed the military operations in the field against Turkey and Bulgaria, and he was to do the same thing under his old chief against the Austrians.

CHAPTER XLVII

AUSTRIA'S STRENGTH AND STRATEGY

LET us now review the Austrian forces that participated in the invasions of Serbia. In number they were practically unlimited; at least they far outnumbered the Serbian forces that met them in the field. Their armament was of the best and their equipment as complete as boundless resources could make it. They were, however, partly made up of the peoples of the Slavic provinces of Austria—Bohemians, Croatians, Dalmatians, and Bosnians. Naturally there could be but little enthusiasm in their attacks on their brother Slavs, and while there are many mutual animosities between these various branches of the Slavic race, such feelings are, at any rate, secondary to the general dislike of the "Schwabs," as the German-Austrians are called, and the Magyars. Possibly this had much to do with the Aus-

trian defeats. The Hungarian, or Magyar, regiments were probably in the majority. But the Magyars from the interior of Hungary have no special reason to hate the Serbians, and, aside from that, they were attacking on foreign soil.

At the head of the Austrian campaigns against Serbia was General Potiorek, generally described as a textbook strategist. But just how much his failures were due to his own inefficiency and how much to the inefficiency of those under him will probably never be determined; he had in the end to suffer for both.

These were the two great contending forces that were set in motion by the departure of Baron Giesl, the Austro-Hungarian Minister, from Belgrade, on July 25, 1914. On the same day the Prince Regent Alexander signed a decree ordering the general mobilization of the Serbian army. Three days later, on July 28, 1914, Austria declared war. By that time Serbia was in the midst of her mobilization.

That the Austrians, who had the advantage of having taken the initiative, and who had presumably chosen their own time for the opening of hostilities, did not immediately take full advantage of their favorable situation has caused much surprise among impartial military critics. On the same day that they declared war they had the opportunity to hurl their troops across the Danube and take Belgrade with practically no opposition. Apparently they were not ready; from that moment the difficulties that would have attended such a movement increased hourly.

A force of 20,000 men was raised almost immediately for the defense of Belgrade. To meet this opposition the Austrians had, on the evening of the day war was declared, July 18, 1914, only one division concentrated between Semlin and Pancsova, opposite Belgrade—a force that was hardly sufficient to take the Serbian capital. Two days later an army corps would have been needed for the enterprise, for by this time the Serbian army had begun concentrating considerable numbers within striking distance of the capital. Thus the first opportunity was lost by the tardiness of the Austrians to act.

It is presumed that the reader has already studied the de-

scription of this theatre of the war presented elsewhere in this work. Aside from that, the movements that follow should only be traced with the aid of a map. Written words are inadequate to give a concrete picture of the field of operations.

The Austrian General Staff realized the difficulties of crossing the Danube. Its general plan, probably prepared long before, contemplated a main attack that should begin from another quarter.

The Austro-Serbian frontier, almost 340 miles in extent, is formed on the north by the Save as well as by the Danube, and on the east and southeast by the Drina River. These two smaller streams abound in convenient fords, especially in summer. To many of these points on the northeastern frontier Austria had already constructed strategic railways. Moreover, the Austrian territory throughout this section is so mountainous and well timbered that large forces of troops could be well screened from observation, whereas the country opposite Belgrade is flat and bane.

It was from this direction that the Serbian General Staff expected the first advance of the enemy. And yet there were dozens of other points where an attack in force was possible. Each must be covered with a force at least strong enough to hold the enemy back long enough to enable the forces stationed at the other points to come up to support. Here was the great advantage that the Austrians had to begin with; an advantage which the attacking army always enjoys. The attacking general alone knows where the first battle shall be fought.

The Serbians, therefore, could not count on meeting the Austrians in full force before they could enter Serbian territory. They realized that they must give way at the first contact; that the Austrians would undoubtedly advance quite some distance within Serbian territory before enough Serbian forces could be brought up against them to make the opposition effective.

Realizing this, it was decided to place fairly strong advance guards at all probable points of invasion with orders to resist as long as possible; until, in fact, defensive tactics could be

adapted to the situation and the main Serbian army could be brought up to offer battle.

However, two points stood out as the most probable. These were the two already mentioned; the north, along the line from Obrenovatz to Belgrade and to Semendria; or, the front Obrenovatz-Ratza-Losnitza-Liubovia. The first possibility had the advantage to the Austrians of offering the shortest route to the center of the country—the Morava Valley, their natural objective. But it also necessitated a difficult crossing of the Danube, which would have had to be preceded by the building of pontoon bridges. This would have given the Serbians time to move up their main forces. The second alternative, an invasion from the east, would have entailed a longer journey, but the advantage of natural covering and easy crossing made it a sounder plan.

On July 28, 1914, the Serbians concentrated their forces in anticipation of either event. The outpost forces were stationed at or near Losnitza, Shabatz, Obrenovatz, Belgrade, Semendria, Pozarevatz and Gradishte. But their principal armies were centrally grouped along the line Palanka-Arangelovatz-Lazarevatz, while weaker, though important, detachments were stationed in the vicinity of Valievo, a branch railroad terminus, and Uzitze. This narrowed the field down to such limits that it was possible to march the troops from point to point, while the few railway facilities available were utilized for food and ammunition supplies.

CHAPTER XLVIII

AUSTRIAN SUCCESSES

ON the morning of July 29, 1914, the day after war had been declared, the residents of Belgrade were startled by a deep roar, followed by the whistling shriek of a huge body hurtling through the air, and a shell burst over the battlements of the old Turkish citadel, doing no damage. Immediately there came another deep shock; the Serbian guns were responding. Thence on

the cannonading along the Danube front continued for week after week, with only now and then a lull.

The Austrian batteries bombarded not only Belgrade, but Semendria, Gradishte and a number of other points along the river bank. Next they were seen building a pontoon bridge out to one of the little islands in the river, opposite the city and barges were towed alongside the landings on the opposite shore, presently to be crowded with black masses of Austrian troops. Naturally, the Serbian gunners made these objects the targets of their fire. But these were mere bluffs, such feints as the skilled boxer makes when he wants to get behind the guard of his opponent. If anything, these demonstrations only served to deepen the conviction of General Putnik that the real danger was not from this quarter.

But where was the first great blow to strike? Naturally, not only the General Staff, but the whole army and population waited in deep anxiety. This tension lasted over the last days of July, into the first week of August, 1914.

Then, on August 6, 1914, some Bosnian peasants, Serbs, appeared and reported that they had seen great bodies of soldiers moving along the mountain roads toward Syrmia, in northeastern Bosnia. Two days later, early in the morning, two Austrian aeroplanes whirred over the River Save and circled over Krupani, Shabatz and Valievo. The last doubts were then dispelled; the attack was coming from the east.

And finally, on August 12, 1914, the message flashed over the wires that the outposts had seen boats in movement, full of soldiers, behind an island on the Drina, opposite Loznitza. Near that town, and in fact along the whole lower course of the Drina, the river has frequently changed its channel, thus cutting out numerous small islands, which would serve as a screen to the movements of troops contemplating a crossing. Pontoon bridges could be built on the farther side of almost any of these islands without being observed from the other shore. This was exactly what the Austrians were doing.

Suddenly, on August 12, 1914, there came a burst of rifle fire and the boom of heavy field guns, and a fleet of barges, under cover

of this fire, emerged from around both ends of one of these islands and made for the Serbian shore. The two battalions of Third Reserve Serbians, stationed there as an outpost, trained their old De Bange field guns, of which they had two batteries, on the oncoming swarms and began firing. But the Austrian fire became heavier and heavier; a blast of steel pellets and shells swept through the cornfields and the plum orchards, tearing through the streets of the village and crumpling up the houses. The breastworks of the small Serbian detachment were literally the center of a continuous explosion of shells.

When a full tenth of their number lay dead or disabled, the Serbians began retiring across the cornfields and up the slopes leading to the heights behind Losnitza. There, on higher ground, which offered more effective shelter, they made a determined stand and continued their fire on the Austrian masses.

Having crossed the river, the Austrians threw up defensive breastworks and dug elaborate trenches, thus fortifying their crossing. Next they built a pontoon bridge, and then the main Austrian army poured across; a whole army corps and two divisions of a second.

Meanwhile, on the same day, August 12, 1914, a similar event was happening at Shabatz, on the Save, where that river takes a sharp southward turn and then swings up again before joining the Danube at Belgrade. Here the country is a level plain, really the southern limit of the great plain which stretches up to the Danube, past Belgrade and so into Hungary. Here, too, the Austrians screened themselves behind an island in the river, then hurled their forces across, driving the feeble detachment of Third Reserve Serbian troops back across the plain up into the hills lying to the southeast of Shabatz. Then the advance guard of the Austrian Fourth Army occupied the town, strongly fortified it and built a pontoon bridge across the river from their railroad terminus at Klenak.

Further passages of a similar nature were forced that day, August 12, 1914, at other points by smaller forces; one at Zvornik and another at Liubovia. In addition the Austrians also threw bridges across the river at Amajlia and Branjevo. Thus

it will be seen that the invasion covered a front of considerably over a hundred miles and that six strong columns of the enemy had crossed, all of which naturally converged on Valievo. For Valievo was the terminus of a small, single track railroad which joined the main line at Mladenovatz. Thus the Austrians would have a convenient side door open into the heart of Serbia which was, of course, their main objective. To this Belgrade was merely incidental. With this line of transport and communication in Austrian hands, Belgrade would fall of itself.

From Losnitza, where the main column of Austrians crossed the Drina to Valievo, runs the River Jadar, along a level valley, which narrows as it nears Valievo. On the left-hand side of the Jadar Valley rise the southern slopes of the Tzer Mountains, covered with cornfields, prune orchards, with here and there a stretch of thick timber. Continuing southward, slightly to the eastward, up the Jadar Valley another range rises, slightly smaller than the Tzer Mountains, forming a smaller valley which branches off eastward. Along this runs the River Leshnitza, parallel with the Jadar until it makes an independent junction with the Drina. Still farther up the valley the foothills of the Iverak ridges are lost in a series of fairly important summits which closely flank the Jadar River.

To the south of the Jadar River the valley stretches into a rolling plain, which rises abruptly into the giant Guchevo Mountains. It is this range, converging with the Tzer and Iverak Mountains toward Valievo, and forming the plain of the Jadar Valley, which was presently to become the center of the first great battle between the Serbians and Austrians.

A military movement against Valievo, therefore, demanded complete possession of these two ridges, which overlooked the line of march. This the Austrians knew well enough, even before the first of their troops had crossed the Drina. As is well known, the best maps, not only of Serbia but of all the Balkan countries, have been made by Austrian engineers. There was probably not a spur, not a fissure, certainly not a trail, of these mountains that had not been carefully surveyed and measured by engineers of the Austrian staff.

The Austrians knew the country they were invading quite as well as did the native Serbians. All through it may be said that it was not through want of accurate knowledge that the Austrians finally met disaster. Rather was it because they misjudged the relative values of their facts. And one of their first mistakes was in overestimating the effects of the two Balkan Wars on the efficiency of the Serbian army. First of all, as was obvious from the leisureliness with which they proceeded to occupy the two mountain chains in question, that they vastly misjudged the capacity of the Serbian troops to make rapid movements. Even as the first shots were being fired across the Drina at Losnitza, the Serbian forces were on the move, westward. Two army corps were at once rushed toward the Valley of the Jadar; part of a third was sent to block the advance of the Austrians from Shabatz. Meanwhile the Austrians took their time. For two days they busied themselves fortifying the bridge at Losnitza.

CHAPTER XLIX

THE GREAT BATTLES BEGIN

ON August 14, 1914, began the first battle of the Serbian campaign. The Austrians proceeded to storm the heights from which the small outpost detachments had all the time been bombarding them with its old-fashioned guns. The Serbians, though few in number, made a desperate resistance. It was their business to hold back the enemy as long as possible, even until the reenforcements should arrive.

Early in the morning of August 14, 1914, the Austrians advanced in a great mass, then charged up the hillsides toward the Serbian position. The Serbians waited until they were well up the steep slopes and the rush of the enemy had subsided to a more toilsome climb. Then they sent down volley after volley from every available weapon.

The Austrian soldiers, who had until then never experienced

anything more warlike than field maneuvers, lost their nerves; the first line broke and ran at the first fire. However, that was likely to happen to any troops under fire for the first time. Down in the plain they formed again, and again they swept up the slopes. This time they did not turn at the first volley. On they came, with fixed bayonets. And presently the first line reached the top of the heights, and the fighting was hand-to-hand. For a moment the Serbians, overwhelmed by numbers, were on the point of fleeing. But these same men had been through many a hand-to-hand encounter with both Turks and Bulgars; that experience stood them in good stead. And again they swept back the attacking masses of Austria-Hungary.

By evening, August 14, 1914, the Austrians had not yet taken the heights. But the Serbians, most of them middle-aged and old men, had spent their vitality. As the dark night lowered over the scene, they fell back, until, at Jarebitze, they met the first advance guards of the oncoming Serbian main army. And here they halted, and the united forces proceeded to dig a trench on a ten-mile front, extending from north to south, through the town and clear across the Jadar Valley. Nor did the Austrians then attempt to follow up this first success. Thus the Serbians were allowed to intrench themselves unmolested until, next day, August 15, 1914, they were joined by the balance of their forces.

Now, by studying the map, it will be seen at a glance that it was only the Tzer Mountains which separated the Austrian column crossing the Drina at Losnitza and the column which had crossed the Save and had occupied Shabatz. Should the Austrians from over the Drina get possession of the Tzer ridges, they would thus effect a junction with the forces in Shabatz, and so form a line that would cut off a large portion of northwestern Serbia. Aside from that, they would have a solid front. But should the Serbians possess themselves of the Tzer ridges first, then they would have driven a wedge in between their two main forces. This would make it difficult for either to advance, for then they would be exposing a flank to the enemy, who would also have a great advantage in position. Moreover, the Serbians would be in a position to turn immediately toward

either of the Austrians' columns, whichever might need most attention.

Meanwhile, the Serbian cavalry had made a reconnaissance toward Shabatz. They immediately sent back reports of overwhelming forces occupying the town. It was out of the question to make any attack there for the present.

It was now learned, for the first time, that another of the enemy's columns had crossed the Drina far down in the south, and was marching on Krupanie, just below the Guchevo Mountains and on the way to the upper part of the Jadar Valley. However, as the first report seemed to indicate that this was only a minor force, a small force of third reserve men was detached to hold this force back and prevent its entrance into the main field of operations.

During the day and night of August 15, 1914, the two opposing forces were moving into position for battle: setting the pawns for the game of strategy that was to be played. The Austrians at Losnitza were advancing up the mountain slopes and took possession of the Tzer and Iverak ridges, straddling the Leshnitza Valley.

Up in Shabatz, Austrian troops were pouring across the pontoon bridges. A flanking column, coming from the Drina, had arrived at Slepehevitch. Another force was stationed with its left and center on Krupani, its right spread out into the mountains north of Liubovia.

On the Serbian side the right wing of the Second Army, screened by the cavalry division, were preparing to cut off the Austrian forces in the north from their juncture with those advancing along the Tzer ridges; the center and left was marching on the enemy on the Iverak ridges, in conjunction with the right of the Third Army, then north of Jarebitze. The center of the Third held the positions south of Jarebitze, while its left, split into small detachments, had been directed to oppose the invasion toward Krupanie and the advance from Liubovia.

Such were the positions of the various forces as dawn broke brightly on the morning of August 16, 1914. As the growing light made objects visible, the extreme right division of the

Serbian front, which was creeping northward to cut off Shabatz, discovered a strong Austrian column moving along the lower spurs of the Tzer Mountains. Obviously this body was clearing the ground for a general descent of the forces up along the ridges; a whole army corps. This movement threatened to become a serious obstacle to the Serbian plan of separating the Austrians in Shabatz from those farther south. But the situation was saved by one of those incidents which sometimes stand out above the savagery of warfare and give to it a touch of grandeur.

A young artillery officer, Major Djukitch, of the Fourth Artillery Regiment, asked permission to go out and meet this body of advancing Austrians with but a single cannon. He would create a diversion which would give the Serbians time to adapt themselves to the changed conditions, though the chances were very largely in favor of his losing his life on this mission. Permission was granted. Calling on volunteers from his command, he advanced with his single cannon and took up a position in the path of the approaching enemy. The moment he opened fire the Austrians, naturally not realizing that only one cannon was opposing them, and believing that a large Serbian force had surprised them, broke into a panic. Half an hour after he had opened fire, the Serbian field commander sent a messenger to Major Djukitch, ordering him to retire. In reply he sent a message to the commander, describing the confusion he had created in the Austrian ranks, and instead of retiring, he asked for reenforcements. The balance of his own battery, a detachment of infantry, and a cavalry division was sent him. The result was that the Austrian column was temporarily driven back into the mountains. Hastily re-forming, the Austrians now massed along a line extending from Belikamen to Radlovatz, while the Serbians deployed along a front running from Slatina through Metkovitch to Gusingrob.

At 11 a. m., August 16, 1914, the two opposing forces opened fire in earnest, up and down the line. All day the cannon roared and the rifles and machine guns crackled; now and again the Austrians would shoot forth from their line a sharp infantry

attack, but these were repulsed, with more and more difficulty as the day advanced, for the Serbians were much inferior in numbers. Toward evening their situation became very critical. Yet every part of the line held out desperately, knowing that reenforcements were being hurried forward from the rear as fast as men could move.

And just before dark, along the roads from the eastward, came the distant cheers from the advancing columns. An officer dashed up on horseback shouting encouragement to the battered men in the trenches. A cheer arose, which rolled up and down the line. Again it rose, then, even before it had died out, with wild yells the Serbians sprang over their breastworks and swept madly across the intervening space to the Austrian lines; smashing through cornfields, over rocks, through the tall grass of orchards. At their heels followed the reenforcing soldiers, though they had that day marched nearly sixty miles. Over the Austrian breastworks they surged, like an angry wave from the sea, their bayonets gleaming in the sunset glow. It was the kind of fighting they knew best; the kind that both Serbians and Bulgars know best, the kind they had practiced most.

Small wonder if the inexperienced peasants from the plains of Hungary, unused till then to any sight more bloody than a brawl in the village inn, trembled before this onslaught. Their officers shouted encouragement and oaths, barely audible above the mad yells of the Serbians. Nevertheless, they gave way before the gleaming line of bayonet blades before them. Some few rose to fight, stirred by some long-submerged instinct generated in the days of Genghis Khan. But the majority turned and fled, helter-skelter, down the sides of the mountains toward the valleys, leaving behind guns, ammunition, and cannon. One regiment, the Hundred and Second, stood its ground and fought. As a result it was almost completely annihilated. The same fate befell the Ninety-fourth Regiment. But the majority sought and found safety in flight. By dark the whole Austrian center was beaten back, leaving behind great quantities of war material.

CHAPTER L

FIRST VICTORY OF THE SERBIANS

THE Serbians had made their first move successfully on that day of August 16, 1914. More important than this mere preliminary defeat of the enemy was the fact that the Austrians in Shabatz were now definitely cut off from any possible juncture with the Austrians in the south. For the present they were debarred from entering the main field of operations. This freed the Serbian cavalry for action elsewhere. Meanwhile a portion of the right wing of the Serbian line was detached to keep the Austrians inside Shabatz.

Farther to the south the Serbians were not so decidedly successful. The center of the Serbian Second Army, that directed against the southern slopes of the Tzer Mountains and the Iverak ridges, had arrived at Tekerish at midnight.

As dawn broke on August 16, 1914, they perceived a strong Austrian column descending from above, coming in the same direction. Unfortunately the Serbians were in the midst of bald, rolling foothills, while the Austrians were up among the tall timber which clothes the mountain slopes at this point. The Serbians deployed, extending their line from Bornololye through Parlok to Lisena, centering their artillery at Kik. The Austrians made the best of their superior position.

For some hours there was furious firing, then, at about eight o'clock the Austrian gunners got the range of the Serbian left flank with their field pieces, which was compelled to fall back. But just then timely reenforcements arrived from the rear, and the Serbians dug themselves in. By evening the Serbians had lost over a thousand men, though they had succeeded in taking 300 prisoners and several machine guns from the Austrians.

The left wing of the Second Army had, in the meantime, arrived against Iverak. That this division was able to arrive at such a timely juncture was due to its having made a forced march of fifty-two miles over the mountain roads during the previous day.

Yet before dawn on the morning of August 16, 1914, it was ready to continue its march to Poporparlok. But then came the news that the Austrians had driven back the left wing of the Third Army from that position and had occupied it.

The situation in which this division found itself was by no means clear. Nothing had been heard from Shabatz. The division operating along the Tzer ridges had been badly hammered. The Third Army had lost Poporparlok. The commander decided to stay where he was and simply hold the ground against any advance of the enemy from Iverak. This division was, therefore, intrenched along a line from Begluk to Kik, and a strong advance was thrown out toward Kugovitchi. During the morning this advance guard made a strong attack against Kugovitchi, drove the Austrians out, and established themselves there.

At dawn, August 16, 1914, the left flank of this division, at Begluk, was shelled by the Austrian artillery, which was followed by infantry attacks. These were easily repulsed during the day. But then the enemy was reenforced, and late that night they came on again in great masses. The Serbians allowed them to almost reach their trenches: then, emptying the magazines of their rifles at them, they piled themselves over their breastworks and into them with bayonets and hand bombs. This was too much for the Austrians; they fled in wild disorder.

Least encouraging was the experience of the Serbian Third Army, which was defending the territory south of the Iverak Mountains. Here the Austrians developed a vigorous and persistent offensive, hoping to turn the Serbian left and thus capture the road to Valievo.

The attack on the positions at Jarebitze commenced at daybreak on August 16, 1914. Here the Serbians held good ground: rocky summits, but so limited in extent that there was room only for a few companies at a time. On the other hand the ground before them was broken up into hollows screened by growing corn. This enabled the Austrians to deploy their lines beyond the Serbian flanks unseen. They did execute just such a movement, and attempted to circle around toward the Serbian rear.

At the same time the Serbians here were attacked from in

front by another hostile column which had come from across the plain on the south side of the Jadar valley, where hollows, sunken roads, and fields of corn again formed ample screening. However, in spite of all these movements, the Serbians were able to hold their own. The Austrian attacks were all beaten back. Their position might have been held indefinitely, but developments to the south were taking on a threatening form.

It will be remembered that an Austrian force had been reported approaching from the south, moving on Krupanie, and that it had seemed so insignificant that a small detachment of third reserve troops had been sent to hold it back. But this enemy force now developed into three mountain brigades.

Reenforcements of infantry and mountain artillery were hurried down to support the retaining force, but the Austrians were able to force their way on toward Zavlaka. Seeing Valievo thus threatened, the Serbians retired from their position at Jarebitze and took up a new position along a line from Marianovitche to Schumer, thus enabling them to face both the enemy columns. This retreat was fortunately not interfered with by the Austrians, though in executing it the Serbian artillery, which had been in position on the right bank of the Jadar, was obliged to pass along the Austrian front in single file, in order to gain the main road.

Early the next morning, August 17, 1914, the Serbians were in position and had extended their line to Soldatovitcha, whence the detachment from Krupanie had retired. Summing up the day's fighting, and considering it as a whole, it will be seen that the Austrians had pretty well held their own, except on their extreme left, where they had failed to get in touch with their forces in Shabatz.

After the defeat of the Austrians at Belikamen on August 16, 1914, the cavalry division was reenforced by some infantry and artillery, then sent on the delicate mission of driving a wedge in between the Austrians in Shabatz and those along the Drina. Spreading out across the Matchva plain, its left wing up against the slopes of the Tzer Mountains, and its right wing within reach of Shabatz, it advanced as far as Dublje in the north. At the

same time it was able to assist the column advancing along the Tzer ridges by playing its artillery on the Austrian position in the mountains at Troyan. Throughout all the fighting this cavalry division rendered notable service by its dismounted action.

On the morning of August 17, 1914, the extreme right of the Serbian front now turned toward Shabatz. Though only half the number of the forces they were proceeding to engage, they continued onward. But on closer approach it became apparent that they could do nothing more than hold the Austrians inside the town. So well and so thoroughly had the Austrians fortified themselves that it was hopeless for so small a force to attempt an attack. Thus this section of the Serbian front settled down to wait for reenforcements.

The center and left of the Second Army now prepared to advance along the Tzer and Iverak ridges. The Austrians in this section, who had suffered so severely the day before at Belikamen, were now concentrated around Troyan, the most easterly and the second highest peak of the chain.

At dawn on August 17, 1914, the Serbians located the Austrians. Immediately they began a heavy artillery fire on this position, then proceeded to infantry attack. Two regiments hurled themselves up the slopes, and with bayonets and hand bombs drove the Austrians back. After that no further progress was possible that day, the Serbians having to wait for their artillery to come up. The Austrians now began intrenching themselves on the heights of Kosaningrad, the loftiest portion of the Tzer range.

Along the Iverak ridges the Austrians made a determined advance. The situation of the Serbian troops in this section, the left wing of the Second Army, was extremely dangerous, for their left flank was becoming exposed by the continued retreat of the Third Army. The only hopeful aspect of their situation was that the Austrians were also having their left flank exposed by the retreat of the Austrians along the Tzer ridges. Evidently the opposing forces realized this fact, for they made a fierce attempt to drive back the Serbians opposing them, so that their danger from the north might be lessened. Half an hour later

they were severely repulsed. But heavy reenforcements came up to the Austrians just then, and again they attacked, this time more successfully.

By noon, August 17, 1914, the Austrians had extended their line over to the Serbian right wing.

Unfortunately, at about that time the Third Army again called for assistance, and this hard-pressed division was compelled to send it. The result was that it was compelled to withdraw gradually to the heights of Kalem. The retirement was executed in good order, and the Austrians satisfied themselves with occupying Kugovitchi. Intrenching themselves in their new position, the Serbians awaited further attacks. Only an ineffectual artillery fire was maintained by the enemy. Meanwhile came the good news of the success of the Serbians along the Tzer ridges, so preparations were made for another advance on the following day, August 18, 1914.

As has already been stated, the extreme south wing of the Serbian front, the Third Army, had retreated the day before so that it could present a solid front against not only the forces opposing it, but also another column coming up from the south, whose advance had been inadequately covered by third reserve men. Here the Austrians attempted to pierce the Serbian line in the extreme south and come out at Oseshina. But though vastly outnumbered, the Serbians held their ground stoutly until late afternoon, when, as already shown, they were compelled to ask the division operating along Iverak for assistance. When this help came they were able to resume their defense.

Thus ended the second day of the general battle. On the whole the Austrians had suffered most, but the general situation was still somewhat in their favor. The Austrian center, along the Tzer ridges, had been pushed back. To retrieve this setback the logical course for the Austrian commander in chief was to curl his wings in around the Serbian flanks. That he appreciated this necessity was obvious, to judge from the furious onslaughts against the Serbian Third Army in the extreme south. But to weaken the Serbian center by these tactics it was also necessary to free the Austrians in Shabatz, or, at least, it was necessary

that they should assume a strong offensive against the extreme right of the Serbians, and, if possible, flank them.

But the Serbians anticipated the plans of the Austrians. Additional reenforcements were sent to the extreme right with orders to spare no sacrifice that would keep the Austrians inclosed within their fortifications around Shabatz.

And true enough, next morning, August 18, 1914, shortly after the hot summer sun had risen over the eastern ridges, the Austrians emerged from Shabatz and attacked the Serbians. The Austrian onslaught was furious, so furious that, step by step, the Serbians, in spite of their reenforcements, were driven back. Fortunately toward evening the Austrian offensive began losing its strength, and that night the Serbians were able to intrench along a line from Leskovitz to Mihana.

This obliged the cavalry division, which had been cooperating with the Serbian center and was driving the Austrians toward Leshnitza, to retire along a line from Metkovitch to Brestovatz. Naturally the advance of the Austrians from Shabatz was endangering its right flank. Moreover, a reenforced column of Austrians also appeared before it. But this opposing force did not press its advance.

Meanwhile, on the same day, August 18, 1914, the Austrians were reenforcing their position on the Tzer ridges. They had also strongly fortified the height of Rashulatcha, which lay between the heights of Tzer and Iverak, whence they could direct an artillery fire to either field of activities.

But the difficulties which the Serbians operating along the Iverak ridges were meeting also hampered the Serbians who were attempting to sweep the Austrians back along the Tzer ridges. If they advanced too far they would expose their flank to the Austrians over on Iverak. As a general rule, it is always dangerous for any body of troops to advance any distance beyond the general line of the whole front, and this case was no exception. However, though delayed, this division did advance. Oxen were employed in dragging the heavy field pieces along the trails over the rocky ridges.

With savage yells the Serbian soldiers leaped over the rocks,

up the jagged slopes of Kosaningrad. Again they had fallen back on their favorite weapons, bayonets and hand bombs. The Austrians put up a stout resistance, but finally their gray lines broke, then scattered down the slopes, followed by the pursuing Serbians. Having gained possession of Kosaningrad Peak, the Serbian commander next turned his attention to Rashulatcha, which, in conjunction with the Serbians over on Iverak, could now be raked by a cross artillery fire. He had previously left a reserve force behind at Troyan. This he now ordered to reenforce his left, which had been advancing along the southern slopes of the Tzer range. This force he now directed against the heights, but the movement was not vigorously followed up.

Over on Iverak the Serbians had succeeded in making some headway. Forming into two columns, this wing marched out and attacked the Austrians at Yugovitchi and succeeded in driving them from their trenches. But immediately the Austrian artillery on Reingrob opened fire on them, and they were compelled to dig themselves in. And late that night, August 18, 1914, the Austrians delivered a fierce counterattack. But night fighting is especially a matter of experience, and here the Serbians with their two Balkan campaigns behind them, proved immensely superior. They drove the Austrians back with their bayonets.

During that same day, August 18, 1914, the Austrians had renewed their pressure on the Third Army and the Third Ban men. Soldatovitcha was their first objective. During the day reenforcements arrived and the commanding general was able to hold his own, retaking Soldatovitcha after it had once been lost. Thus ended the day of August 18, 1914, the third day of the battle.

Early next morning, on August 19, 1914, the Austrians in Shabatz renewed their efforts to penetrate the Serbian lines to the southward. So determined was their effort that finally the Serbians in this sector were driven back over on to the right bank of the River Dobrava. All day the fighting continued, the Serbians barely holding their position, strong as it was.

This success of the Austrians hampered the cavalry division, which had not only to secure its flank, but had also to keep between the Shabatz Austrians and the Serbians operating on Tzer, whom they might have attacked from the rear.

Along the Tzer ridges, however, things were going well for the Serbians. At noon they had taken Rashulatcha, which left the column free to continue its pursuit of the fleeing Austrians along the ridges. From the heights above the Serbian guns fired into the retreating Austrians down along the Leshnitza River, turning the retreat into a mad panic. By evening the advance guard of this division had arrived at Jadranska Leshnitza.

In the early morning, August 19, 1914, the Serbians over on the Iverak ridges had attacked in deadly earnest. Naturally the huge success and rapid advance of the Serbians over on the Tzer ridges were of great importance to them. Here the Austrians were put to rout too. At 11 a. m. the Serbians stormed Velika Glava and took it, but here their progress was checked by a strong artillery fire from the west of Rashulatcha. Then rifle firing broke out along the whole line from Velika Glava to Kik. Near Kik the Austrians were massing in strong force, and the Third Army was reported to be again in danger, this time from a hostile turning movement. Fortunately general headquarters was able to come to the rescue with reenforcements. This lessened the danger from Kik. Whereupon the advance along Iverak was continued. By the middle of the afternoon, when the Austrians were driven out of Reingrob, the Serbians controlled the situation. The defeat of the Austrians was complete.

The Third Army was again in trouble during this day, August 19, 1914. Its left flank continued its advance from Soldatovitcha, but the Austrians attempted to pierce their center. But finally this sorely tried section of the Serbian front emerged triumphant. Before evening the Austrians were driven back in scattered disorder, leaving behind them three hospitals filled with wounded, much material, and 500 prisoners.

Here ended the fourth day of the bloody struggle—August 19, 1914. In the north around Shabatz the Austrians had made some advance, but all along the rest of the line they had suffered com-

plete disaster. The two important mountain ridges, Tzer and Iverak, which dominated the whole theatre of operations, were definitely in the hands of the Serbians. And finally, the Third Army had at last broken down the opposition against it.

Next morning, August 20, 1914, dawned on a situation that was thoroughly hopeless for the Austrians. Even up around Shabatz, where they had been successful the day before, the Austrians, realizing that all was lost to the southward, made only a feeble attack on the Serbians, who were consequently able to recross the Dobrava River and establish themselves on the right bank.

The cavalry division, whose left flank was not freed by the clearing of the Tzer ridges, hurled itself against the Austrians in the plains before it and threw them into wild disorder. First they shelled them, then charged. The panic-stricken Magyars fled through the villages, across the corn fields, through the orchards.

"Where is the Drina? Where is the Drina?" they shouted, whenever they saw a peasant. A burning, tropical sun sweltered over the plain. Many of the fleeing soldiers dropped from exhaustion and were afterward taken prisoners. Others lost themselves in the marshy hollows and only emerged days later, while still others, wounded, laid down and died where they fell.

In the Leshnitza similar scenes were taking place. From the ridges above the Serbian guns roared and poured hurtling steel messages of death down into the throngs of retreating Austrians. Some few regiments, not so demoralized as the others, did indeed make several attempts to fight rear-guard actions, to protect their fleeing comrades, but they again were overwhelmed by the disorganized masses in the rear pouring over them.

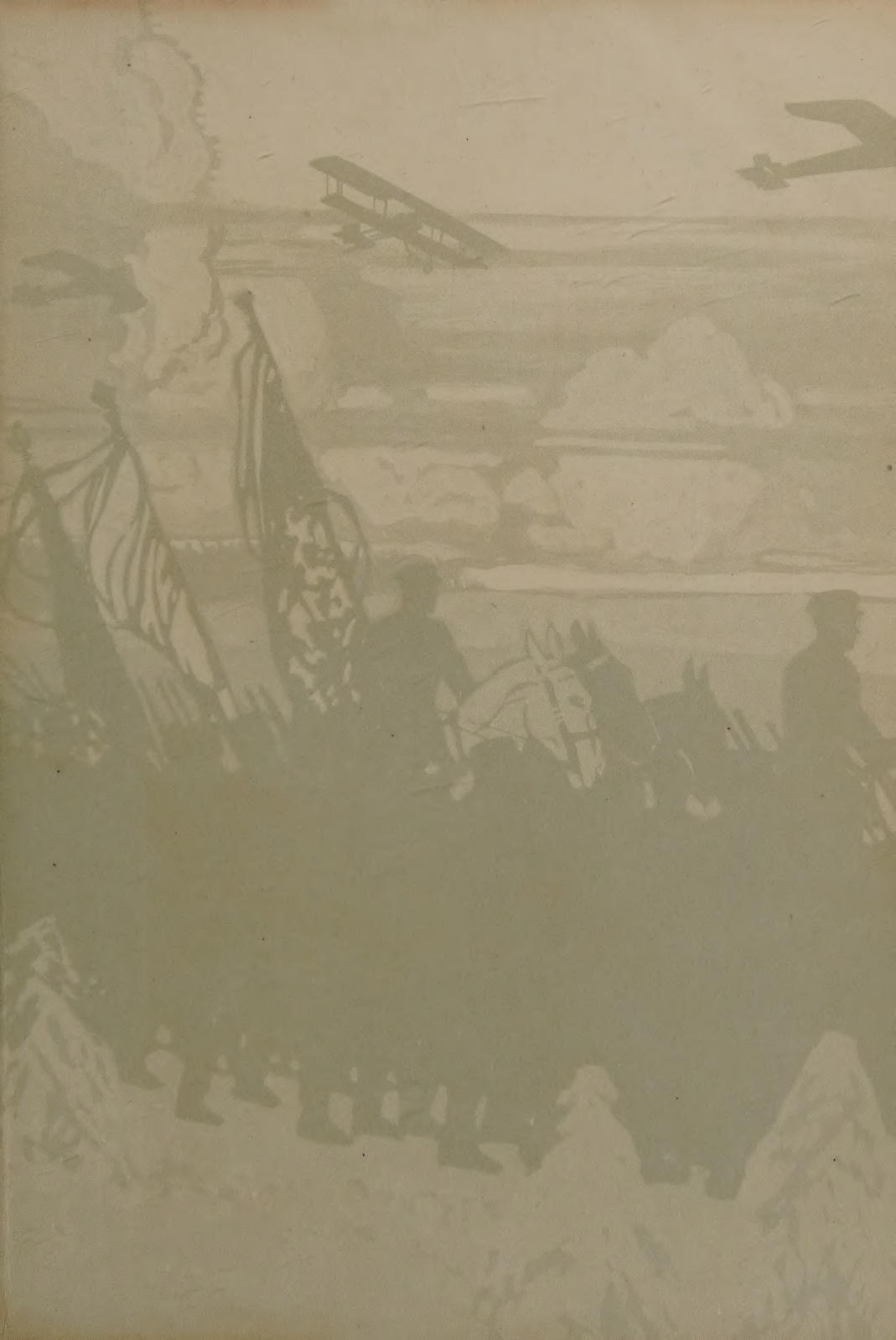
In the Jadar valley another disorganized mob of Austrians was fleeing before the Serbians up on the Iverak ridges, who also were pouring a hot artillery fire into their midst. Presently the Third Army joined in the mad chase. And now the whole Austrian army was wildly fleeing for the Drina River.

There remained only one exception during the early part of the day, August 20, 1914. This was the Austrian forces on Kik, to the northwest of Zavlaka. The Serbian reenforcements which, it will be remembered, had originally been directed toward Marianovitche, had been afterward sent westward, and at dawn on August 20 they approached Kik in two columns. The left column occupied Osoye without resistance, but in descending from that position, the Austrian artillery opened fire on it.

An hour later the right column came up and opened an artillery fire, and under cover of this bombardment a Serbian regiment reached the foot of the mountain. As was afterward learned, the Austrians at this point had had their machine guns destroyed by the Serbian artillery fire, and by this time their own artillery had been sent back, in preparation for the retreat. Consequently they were only able to receive the Serbian attack with rifle fire.

At the height of this skirmish the extreme left of the Serbians on Iverak, which had remained to guard against attack from this quarter, moved over against the Austrians. The cross-fire was too much for them; they turned and fled, leaving behind over six hundred dead, the Serbians in this affair losing only seven killed. Jarebitze was now occupied; the rest of the Serbians joined in the general pursuit.

That night, August 20, 1914, the Austrians swarmed across the Drina, fleeing for their lives. By the next day the whole river bank was cleared of them. Serbian soldiers lined the whole length of the frontier in this section. There remained now only the Austrians in Shabatz to deal with. The whole Serbian army was now able to concentrate on this remaining force of the enemy left in Serbian territory.

Early on August 21, 1914, the attack began, and the Austrians here fought stoutly. Indeed, all that day they held the Serbians off from behind their intrenchments. On August 22, 1914, the Serbians made a general assault. Fortunately they found a weakness in the fortifications on the western side of the town. To create a diversion, the Austrians delivered a counterattack along the road toward Varna.

By the morning of August 24, 1914, the Serbians had brought up a number of heavy siege guns. But when the general bombardment had already commenced, it was found that the Austrians had evacuated the town during the night, and retreated across the river. And so the first Austrian invasion of Serbia came to its disastrous end.